RAINCLIFFE WOOD
COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE

Welcome to the Raincliffe Wood Community Enterprise Summer 2016 Newsletter.

Find out what's happening in England's largest community-managed woodland.

A Warm Welcome from Chairman Alan Robertshaw

Welcome to our Summer 2016 newsletter.

Looking out of the window as I write this, it is clear that it's summer has indeed finally arrived and the beautiful green canopy now covering the Woods assures me that it has.

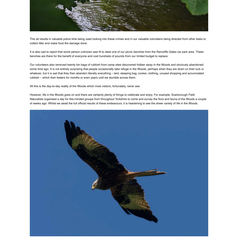
And with the new season comes the news that our Woodland Management Plan has finally, after more than twelve months of hard work both with the various organisations which need to satisfy, been approved.

This is good news because it means that we have permission to continue with the work we said to do in the Woods and, hopefully, receive the grants which will help us to do the work we want to do.

On a less positive note, there has recently been a serious outbreak of digging by mountain bikers in the Woods.

Whilst we wish to encourage all kinds of activities in the Woods, including mountain biking, this does need to be done in a controlled and sensible way so as not to damage archaeological monuments and wildlife.

Most of the Forge Valley is a National Nature Reserve, which is the highest category of protection given to any landscape, and there are a lot of very rare species living in the Woods. Unfortunately, the digging that has taken place has caused damage to Forge Road verges and on losing vegetation. It also damaged the root system of the beech trees and has allowed for the digging.



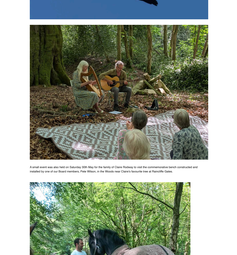
This all results in valuable prime living space being lost to the these crimes and in our valuable volunteers being diverted from other tasks to collect litter and make-good the damage done.

It is also sad to report that some person unknown was fly-tipping one of our picnic benches from the Raincliffe Woods car park area. These benches are flown to the nearest anywhere and now hundreds of pounds from our limited budget is needed.

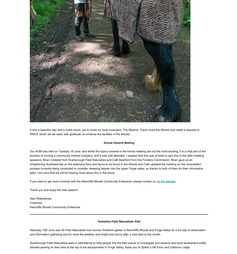
Our volunteers also removed twenty-five bags of rubbish from camp sites discovered hidden away in the Woods and obviously abandoned overnight. This rubbish included discarded tents, sleeping bags, cooking utensils, food and drink containers and even a pair of shoes! Well, whatever, but it is sad that they then abandon literally everything - tents, sleeping bag, cooker, clothing, unused shopping and discarded rubbish - which then factors for months or even years until we stumble across them.

All this is the day-to-day reality of the Woods which most visitors, fortunately, never see.

However, life in the Woods goes on and there are certainly plenty of things to celebrate and enjoy. For example, Scarborough Field Naturalists organised a day for the Raincliffe Woods Group from Birmingham Woodland to come and survey the flora and fauna of the Woods a couple of weeks ago. Words do not do justice to the full official results of these endeavours. It is hardening to see the sheer variety of life in the Woods.



A small event was also held on Saturday 28th May for the family of Crime Railway to visit the commemorative bench constructed and installed some time ago in Beech Hollows, Ruth Moore of the Woods told Chalmers Newsline that Raincliffe Woods.



A special beneficiary day and a lively picnic ran in honour by local volunteers. The Mayoress, Cllrs Jones-Ward and Mr Robertshaw and Raincliffe Wood Community Enterprise (RWCE) which will be used, with gratitude, to enhance the facilities in the Woods.

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM was held on Tuesday 15 June, and whilst the losses covered in the formal meeting are not the most exciting, it is a vital part of the process of running a community interest company, and it was well attended. I suspect that the use of beach and pub in the after-meeting speakers, Brian Caldwell from Scarborough Field Naturalists and Cath Bashford from the Forestry Commission. Brian gave us an interesting talk about the Field Naturalists' survey of the Woods and Cath talked about the Forestry Commission's Woodland Creation initiative projects currently being considered to consider releasing funds for the upper Forge valley, as Skyline is both of them for their informative talks. I am sure that we will be hearing more about this in the future.

If you want to get more involved with the Raincliffe Woods Community Enterprise, please contact us via the website.

Thank you and enjoy the new season!

Alan Robertshaw
Chairman
Raincliffe Woods Community Enterprise

Yorkshire Field Naturalists Visit

Saturday 14th June saw 40 Field Naturalists from across Yorkshire gather in Raincliffe Woods and Forge Valley for a full day of observation and information gathering and to cross the member sees bright and sunny after a cold start to the month.

Scarborough Field Naturalists were in attendance to help people find the best places to investigate and observe and have lackeeners kindly offered to guide people on the tour of the top of the woodlands to Forge Valley. Guest also to Sallow & Cliff Farm and Chalmers Lodge.

A group of both enthusiasts that set out from Hayes Lodge and were examining their findings party on Saturday morning, with over 30 species identified.

Others were searching for fungi, lichens, mosses and bryophytes before the 2 miles of woodland trained after by Raincliffe Woods Community Enterprise (RWCE).

At the end of the day the naturalists met up to discuss their findings and a full report will be available, hopefully for our next newsletter.

Battle of the Bulbets by Robert Peacock

Our annual battle with Himalayan Balsam continues, but this year we have a winning effort.

Our team of volunteers underestimated this year's campaign early on the 22nd of May to ensure we could retrieve as much balsam before it flowered and seeded. We had to wait for the ground to dry out after the heavy rain and storms and beach heads and it had proved very accurate in identifying where we would find early sprouting balsam.

We concentrated our work on the western north of the Scarborough at Old Mary's Mouth car park and have successfully pulled and cut balsam from the Forge Valley Woodlands and Forge Valley Nature Reserve. We have also cleared areas of the Nature Reserve and towards the road where the rate of regrowth spread out and pulls back has now been limited.

Our volunteers have understood the work with great sensitivity, selectively pulling the balsam plants and avoiding the Pyrenean ancient tombs-similar. One volunteer got so close he nearly disappeared in a bush feeding out for the day, it was so well hidden.

We have, since 22 June, 1275 bags of balsam that we've filled for collection. Collecting at Hollows Lodge on 28th of June, we visited three large areas between the river and the road on the east bank. Dessert along the sections has reached the roadside and the distinctive pink flowers are now visible from the road. We caught Cathy's camera operator. Here the plants were too intense and we ran a strange pale of balsam which made access very difficult.

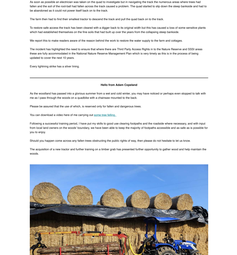
To all those who volunteer to tackle the balsam, a huge thank you to all who have to cope with nettle stings, wasp nests, plant rash from Pigeon grass/cleavers, Scotch thistles and large ground. This year, the volunteer sessions has not helped although it's better than pulling rain.

The battle continues. We are now limited to removing as much balsam just to reduce the flowering and seeding, but as with this year we will keep great efforts to giving to spring up and catch as much as possible before it flowers.

The sign of our success will be next year and to what extent we have pushed the balsam back to the river banks where it is inaccessible we will getting awards from Scarborough Borough from upstream areas which are being controlled.

Once again the Scarborough Conservation Volunteers are also tackling the balsam on Scalby Beck and being exactly the same challenges.

Scarred Woods



The woodlands have a rich history and one area of the woodlands has provided water to Sallow Mill Farm and cottages for generations.

The farm has first policy records lights to maintain the collection and providing of the Scarbell Springs water.

Access has been occasional and to ought little from a gated entrance at the top of the path which runs down to Old Mary's Mouth.

The stairs in that the way path that the entrance at the Forge valley and to and from work where they made rail spines, hence the name Spines Hill.

On Friday 13th of June, a lightning strike hit the farm electrical supply lasting not one of the phases of supply to the farm. It turn the back out the electrical supply to the pump at Scarbell Spring, having made supply for the livestock, farm and cottages.

As soon as possible an electrician was taken of the quest to investigate the cause and to investigate the mice numerous areas where mice had taken and the pit of the tractor had fallen across the track caused a problem. The quest started to slip down the steep bankside and had to be rescued by the Fire Brigade and Mountain Rescue Team.

The farm then had to find their isolated tracks to separate the track and get the quest back up to the farm.

To remove cattle around the track has been cleared with a bigger track to the original width but this has caused a loss of some remarks plants which had naturalised themselves on the track that had built up over the years from the ploughing away footstalk.

We report this to make residents aware of the reason behind the work to restore the water supply to the farm and cottages.

The incident has highlighted the need to ensure that where there are Third Party Access Rights to the Nature Reserve and SSSI areas. Natural England and the Forge Valley Nature Reserve Management Plan which is now finding its life in it's process of being updated to cover the next 10 years.

Every lightning strike has a silver lining.

Hello from Adam Copeland

As the woodland has passed into a glorious summer from a wet and cold winter, you may have noticed or perhaps even stopped to talk with me (I pass through the woods on a goodbye with a chainsaw) muscled to the back.

Please be assured that the use of which, is reserved only for fallen and dangerous trees.

You can download a video from of me carrying out some tree felling.

Following a successful training period, I have put my skills to good use clearing bracelets and the roadside where necessary, and with input from local land owners on the woods' boundary, we have been able to keep the majority of bracelets accessible and safe as is possible for you to enjoy.

Should you happen come across any fallen trees obstructing the public rights of way, then please do not hesitate to let us know.

The acquisition of a new tractor and further training on a timber grab has presented further opportunity to gather wood and help maintain the woods.

Whilst we cannot access all areas of the wood with machinery, additional help in the form of our horse power is part of an exciting new idea.

We have embarked on a partnership, to lease with a shire horse, with the long term goal of extracting timber from the more protected areas and less accessible parts of the woodland.

As always, we have had many enjoyable volunteer days, including improvement sections in the paths around Raincliffe Dale, a much improved Parking area at the Old Mary's Mouth, boundary clearance in the forge valley and so much more.

I would like to thank Hayes Lodge and Jim Jennett and grass your time, as so much of what you do is so important for the woods.

I look forward to seeing you out and about!

Interactive Map

We are very proud of our virtual tour of the woods that has been put together for the amazing help of our volunteers.
A big thank you to Nick Grantham Full of Jobsworth and Grant Rayner of YourWiki. Nick Newcomb from The Sounding Space and Bridget Hemmingway from Scarborough Borough Council for their continued support.
Hampsfell The Bunnies Great Yarnsdale Longcliffe Chase Ryan Mitchell Crosses Moor
We hope many more people will now feel part of these beautiful woods.
Click on the Map to Explore Raincliffe Forge Valley Community Trust
Here on Nick Grantham's Map

Supporting our Community Woodland

As a not-for-profit social enterprise, all monies generated from our guided walks, memorial trees, firewood and map sales are reinvested back into our woodland. Our aims are to:

- Create a healthy, thriving woodland resource to people and diversion
- Protect and enhance a mosaic of wildlife habitats
- Make the woods a place people want to visit
- Make routes to bridges, forester and footpaths

- Deliver events and activities
- Keep the site clean, and deal with fly tipping
- Manage invasive, non-native species that threaten our woodland

To make a donation, scan our QR code:
Or you can make a donation via this link.

Visit Our Website To Find Out More

Future Plans

One of the key issues highlighted by the business plan are the financial challenges faced by the community enterprise. This is primarily due to the significant land management responsibilities and liabilities associated with managing a freely accessible public green space containing 3 miles of highways and over 10 miles of public rights of way against extreme weather and with the increased threat from tree pests and diseases.

Read Our Business Plan Here

Become a Member of Raincliffe Wood Community Enterprise!

If you are interested in Raincliffe Wood Community Enterprise why not become a member?
Membership is free, for life, and means you own the Enterprise equally with every other member.
Once a member, you can also become a volunteer and be practically involved in the project.
You will get regular updates on what is happening, be able to vote at meetings and the AGM, and stand for election to the management board if you wish.

Become a Member here!

So why not plan your visit and immerse yourself in nature!

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Our mailing address is:
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