
Newsletter and task programme

Harlow Conservation Volunteers (HCV) was founded in 1985 to give local people the chance to participate in nature conservation work in and around Harlow. HCV is affiliated to the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV).

Our group has been funded by Grassroots Grants, which is funded by the Office of the Third Sector.

BTCV

Sedum House, Mallard Way,
Doncaster, South Yorkshire.
DN4 8DB, 01302 388883
Email : information@btcv.org.uk
Web : www2.btcv.org.uk

TASK INFORMATION

Tasks start at 9.30am. Most end at about 4.30pm. Everyone is welcome and your help will be valued for whatever time you can spare. However, if you are between 16 and 18 years old your parent or guardian must sign a consent form – please contact the HCV Secretary. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult who must be responsible for them at all times. No previous experience is necessary. Instruction in techniques and safe working practice will be given.

WHAT TO BRING

You'll need a packed lunch and a mug, strong footwear (work boots, walking boots, or wellies for wet tasks), old warm clothes, and waterproofs. Sun protection is advisable (even in winter). We provide tools and protective gear, as well as tea and coffee.

HEALTH AND INSURANCE

Insurance cover is arranged for the group on task. An up-to-date anti-Tetanus injection is strongly advised for most outdoor activities. If you think you may not be covered on this or other health issues, you are advised to consult your doctor.

CONTACT US:

Marilyn Hart (Secretary)
70 Rivermill, Harlow, Essex
CM20 1NT. ☎01279-865239
Email: gary.dobrin@virgin.net
Web : www.harlowwildlife.org.uk

GROUP ORGANISERS

Andrew Tomlins ☎01279-434322
Marilyn Hart ☎01279-865239
Colin Incoln ☎01279 635574
Gary Dobrin ☎01707-375216

HARLOW COUNCIL CONTACTS

Darren Fazackerley,
☎01279-446997
Glenn Mulleady
☎01279-430005

Chairman's Chat: Spring 2009

By Andrew Tomlins

The last few months have been very busy for the group. Last November we were made aware of a new grant scheme for local community groups called Grassroots Grants, funded by the Cabinet Office of the Third Sector. We applied and were successful, receiving the maximum grant of £5,000 "for equipment, volunteer training, insurance, and publicity for a conservation group." It has been a rush to spend the money by the end of March deadline. A bit over half the money has been spent on chainsaw equipment and training. Danny Kings has achieved his National Certificate of Competence, and this has already made a difference on tasks at Hawkenbury Meadow and Parndon Moat Marsh.

At Hawkenbury, in January we managed to coppice one large willow with just hand tools; on the most recent task there we did three, completing the coppice of the large willows in the middle of the meadow we have been working on slowly over the past few years. Other items of expenditure include a print run of the group's publicity leaflet with colour photos, some BTCV publications, waders and muck rake for pond work etc. We are also going for a long shaft hedge trimmer for use on the ground to cut reeds on the marshes.

Are we right to use noisy petrol power tools? Cont...

The intention is these power tools should assist with particularly heavy jobs, not take the place of our skilled volunteers. The chainsaw should be used only to fell the largest trees we tackle that might take the whole day with a bow saw, to cut large trunks to manageable size, and trim off stumps. There will still be plenty of opportunity to volunteers to fell the smaller trees by hand in peace and quiet, aside from the odd puff or groan of effort.

What about the use of petrol fuelled equipment - it is not exactly zero-carbon. In trying to save the planet are we perhaps helping to kill it? Maybe in future such power tools will run on bio-ethanol, electric powered from a hydrogen fuel cell produced by wind energy, or from a steam engine-powered generator running on the wood we cut down. Perhaps at some stage our carbon rations will get so tight we'll go back to a world of woodsmen felling trees with huge old-fashioned 2-man crosscut saws, but then we wouldn't need nature reserves anyway. Right now I think we should be doing what we can in the most effective way to conserve the habitats to ensure the survival of the greatest biodiversity; and tools available at the moment run on fossil fuel. The world may eventually with the right technology tackle or even reverse climate change, but if in the meantime species are lost through habitat deterioration, there is no chance of getting them back. Well that's my view - what do you think?

Netteswell Plantation Footbridge

Having been squeezed into third place in last year's Harlow Hotspots competition some funds have been found for the materials for this project. As I write it is touch and go whether the materials can be sourced by the inevitable 31st March funding deadline. But if it does go ahead with the tasks as planned in the programme, it will be a really good task to work on. It should also act as a catalyst for bringing the site which is one of the town's county wildlife sites into "positive conservation management".

Greenteam Volunteers

At the HCV AGM back in October I mooted the idea that there was scope for tasks midweek over and above the long established Tuesday Wildspace group at Parndon Wood. There are many people free during the week who would prefer to come out then rather than at the weekend. Darren Fazackerley was thinking along the same lines, and he has been able to push this idea along much faster than we could have on a purely voluntary basis. The result is the GreenTeam Volunteers programme of tasks currently once a month on Wednesdays mainly on the county wildlife sites. The programme is more or less firmed up till the end of the year - we've agreed to publish an outline of the programme in the HCV newsletter.

Harlow Wildlife Projects

Harlow Wildlife Projects is a newly formed organisation with the aim of securing funding to support wildlife conservation projects within Harlow. We aim to support a range of projects, large and small, within Harlow to improve biodiversity and encourage awareness of the rich variety of wildlife within our Town.

If you have any ideas for future wildlife projects we can support, are able to provide financial backing for such projects or if you are interested in becoming a member please contact us using the details below.

Telephone: Andrew Tomlins (Chairman) 01279 434322

Email: harlow_wildlife@yahoo.co.uk

**Harlow Wildlife Projects, c/o Parndon Wood Nature Reserve,
Parndon Wood Road, Harlow, Essex, CM19 4SF.**

Photograph Request – Dear Volunteers, You may have noticed that over recent newsletters publications, there is a lack of pretty, green and/or fluffy things to look at! I'm not able to get on to many tasks these days so please, if anyone has any photos to share, old or new, film or digital please let me have a copy so that they can be shared with the group. You can email them to the address above, post or drop them at the Conservation Centre. Thanks, Ed.

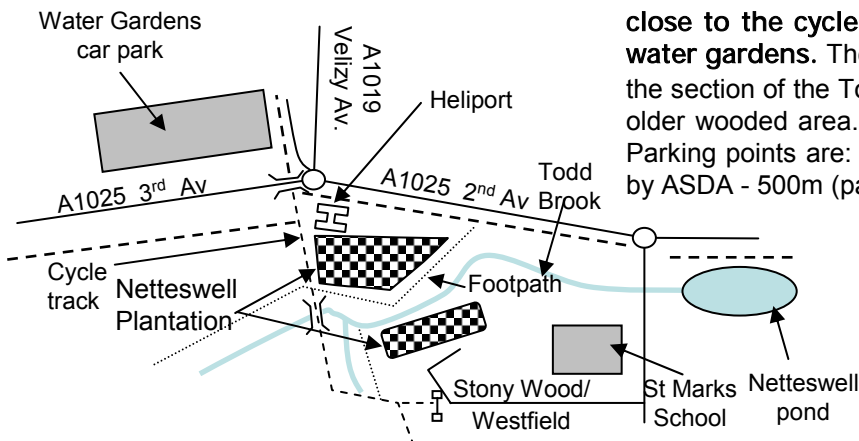
Task Programme April '09 – October '09

Netteswell Plantation Bridge

Saturday 4th and Sunday 5th April Path Clearing & Laying of Foundations

Task leader: Andrew T.

All hands on deck for HCV's most ambitious task in recent years. Over both Saturday and Sunday we will be clearing paths down to the bridge site to allow ease of access, and constructing the foundations for the installation of the bridge during the next task



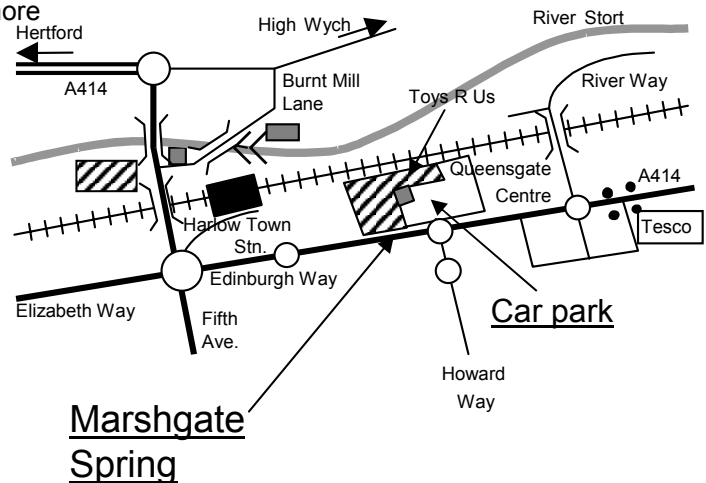
Please check with task leader before each task to ensure it is happening as planned. Additional tasks to complete the bridge will be taking place during the following week, so contact the task leader to find out more information as to locations and times.

Sunday 3rd May Marshgate Spring Management for Meadow Rue

Task leader: Colin L.

Cutting vegetation near this locally rare plant will be undertaken during today's task.

Meet in the Toys 'R' Us car park at the shop front, Edinburgh Way at 9.30am. Grid Ref. TL 454 114.



Sunday 19th April Installation of Bearers

Task leader: Andrew T.

Today we will be transporting the bearers for the bridge to the bridge site and placing them in position for the final tasks during the week. "Many hands make light work" and for this task we need as many hands as possible.

Directions: Meet at 9.30am at the Heliport, close to the cycle track underpass from the water gardens. The bridge site is half way along the section of the Todd Brook bordering the main older wooded area. OS Grid Ref is TL 449 094. Parking points are: Town Centre Water Gardens by ASDA - 500m (pay & display!) or at end of Westfield/start of Stony Wood by gate to a spur of the cycle track running past the wood - 500m.

Late comers should go down the cycle track straight down the hill and turn left on to the footpath by the side of the brook this side of the cycle track bridge.

Wildlife Fayre 2009

Sunday 17th May

Parndon Wood Nature Reserve

HCV Contact: Andrew T.

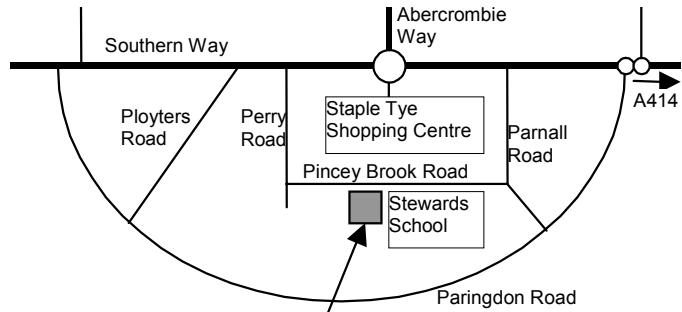
Come along to the annual Wildlife Fayre to help HCV provide demonstrations and education on the tasks we carry out and skills we learn.

Meet at Parndon Wood Nature Reserve at 9.30am.

Task Programme April '09 – October '09

Sunday 31st May Stewards School & Hawkenbury Meadow Wildflower & Bee Orchid Survey

Task leader: Jenny S.
Survey of Steward's School
plant-rich meadow followed
by Hawkenbury Meadow.



Stewards School Meadow

Meet at 9.30am at the school entrance
on Pincey Brook Road off Parnall Road off
Southern way behind the Staple Tye
Shopping Centre. Grid Ref. TL 445 079.

Tuesday 2nd June: HCV Planning Meeting.

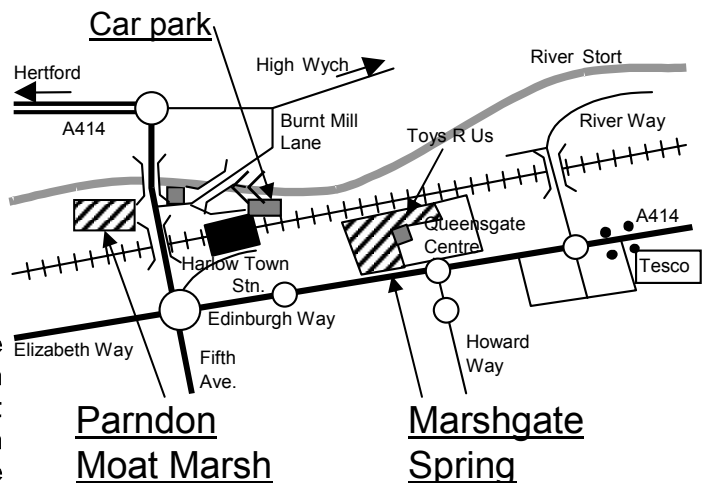
Come along for a evening meal and drink and give us some
ideas for the future programmes and HCV display at the
Harlow Town Show in September.

Harlow Mill, Cambridge Road, CM20 2EP 7.30pm

Sunday 7th June Parndon Moat Marsh Footpath Improvements & New Bench Seat

Task leader: Danny and Colin L.
Today's task will involve levelling
of the pathway and the
installation of a new bench seat
overlooking the pond, which was
subject to tasks by HCV in 2008.

Directions: Meet at **Burnt Mill Lane**
car park 9.30am, off A414 between
Harlow Town Station roundabout
and High Wych roundabout. Turn
off Burnt Mill Lane between the
Outdoor Pursuits Centre and the
bridge over the canal.
Site grid ref, TL 443 113



Parndon Moat Marsh

Marshgate Spring

Sunday 12th July Parndon Moat Marsh Tree Planting Aftercare & Footpath Repair

Task leader: Linda H.
During today's task we will be
attending to the trees planted at
Parndon Moat Marsh by HCV, and
making repairs to the footpath where
necessary.

Directions and times as above.

Sunday 21st June Marshgate Spring Sycamore Clearance

Task leader: Gary D.
Task to remove sycamore to improve
light conditions within the local nature
reserve.

Directions and times as above.

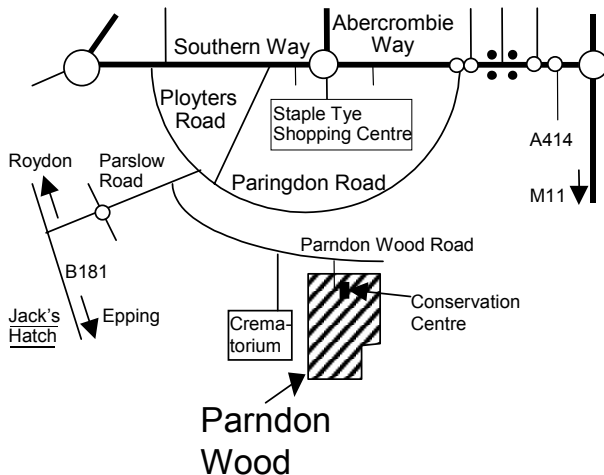
Task Programme April '09 – October '09

Sunday 26th July Marshgate Spring Dam restoration

Task leader: Colin L.

Today's task involves the restoration of the dam, which regulates the water levels within Marshgate Spring Nature Reserve. Bring your wellies!

Directions and times as above.



Sunday 9th August Parndon Wood Nature Reserve HCV 600TH TASK

Task leader: Andrew T, Danny and Colin.

To celebrate the 600th task completed by the group in its 24 year history. Come along to Parndon Wood to help construct a new bench seat for outdoor lessons, followed by a celebratory BBQ.

Directions: Meet at Parndon Wood Nature Reserve at 9.30am (for directions see Conservation Centre). Parking available at Parndon Wood Nature Reserve.

Sunday 23rd August Latton Woods

Footpath work and waymarking

Task leader: Andrew T and Glenn

Come along to Latton Woods Wildlife Site to help improve the conditions of the area for visitors.

Meet at the large pond at the top of the Common on the edge of the wood. From Southern way take Trotters Road to Clifton Hatch where the road bends and becomes Commonside Road. From here proceed on foot up the Common.

Sunday 6th September: Harlow Town Show 2009

Come along and join in with the displays and activities at the Town Show this year.

Please contact HCV members closer to the time to arrange times and meeting points.

Task Programme April '09 – October '09

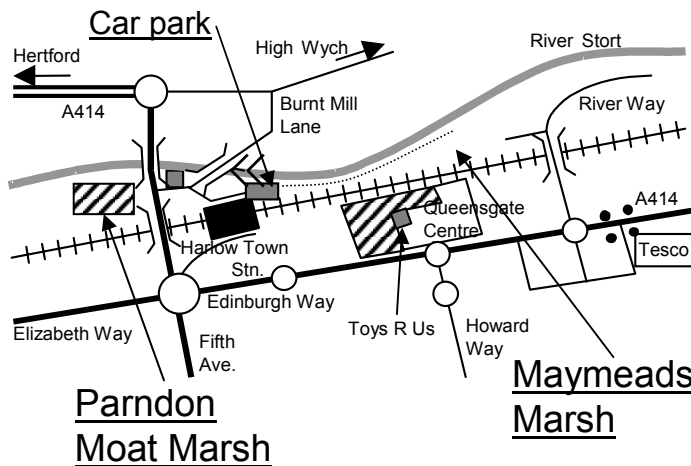
Sunday 20th September Maymeads Marsh Nature Reserve Reedmace pulling

Task leader: Linda H
Management of reedmace marshland to maintain the wetland habitat. Bring shorts or waders – be prepared to get wet!

Sunday 4th October Maymeads Marsh Nature Reserve Reedmace pulling

Task leader: Colin L
Continuation of reedmace management begun on 20th September

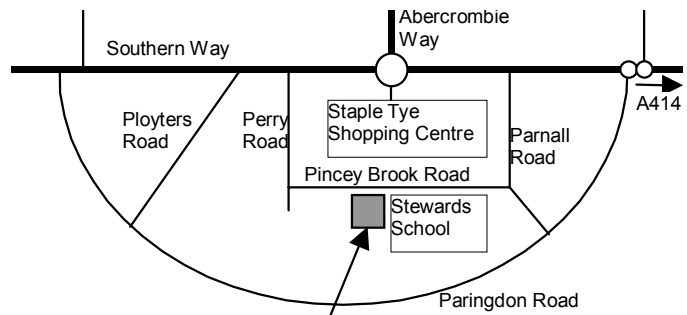
Directions: Meet at Burnt Mill Lane car park 9.30am, off A414 between Harlow Town Station roundabout and High Wych roundabout. From Harlow turn right into Burnt Mill Lane then turn right after the Outdoor Pursuits Centre but before the bridge. Site grid ref, TL454 118



Sunday 18th October Stewards School Meadow cutting

Task leader: Andrew T
Cutting of species rich hay meadow followed by apple scrumping to reward your hard work.

Meet at 9.30am at the school entrance on Pincey Brook Road off Parnall Road off Southern way behind the Staple Tye Shopping Centre. Grid Ref. TL 445 079.



Stewards School Meadow

Sunday 1st November Parndon Moat Marsh Sedge cutting

Task leader: To be confirmed
Annual thinning of vegetation to preserve diversity of habitat. Important site for Desmoulin's Whorl Snail (Essex Biodiversity Action Plan species).

FORTHCOMING HCV TASK DATES

- 15th November
- 29th November
- 13th December

Dear Volunteers, It is with pleasure that we prepare and deliver this newsletter and programme to you. However if you are no longer able to come along to a task every now and then, please let us know and we will remove your details from the mailing list. Thanks again, Ed.

GreenTeam Task Programme

April '09 – December '09

Greenteam tasks take place on Wednesdays between 10am and 2pm. Here is a summary of the programme for the rest of this year.

Wed 22nd April - Netteswell Plantation - footbridge construction

Wed 20th May - Hospital & Risdens Wood - bridge building

Wed 17th June - Marshgate Spring - Sycamore removal

Wed 15th July - Timberlands Fishery - tree planting aftercare (TBC)

Wed 26th August - Parndon Wood - Charcoal making

Wed 23rd Sept - Latton Woods - Scrub clearance around ponds

Wed 21st Oct - TBD

Wed 18th Nov - TBD

Wed 16th Dec - Parndon Wood - Xmas burn up

Woody Events

The events listed below have a wood theme that may be of interest to HCV volunteers. Some of us will probably be going to some of these so if you are interested ask around and we may be able to share transport and make a day out of it.

Fri 24th - Sat 25th April - Celebration of Trees, Capel Manor

Thur 7th - Sun 10th May - Living Crafts, Hatfield House

Sat 16th - Sun 17th May - Weird & Wonderful, Haughley Park, nr Stowmarket, Suffolk

Thur 28th - Mon 31st August - Festival of the Tree, Westonbirt Arboretum

Sat 12th - Sun 13th Sept - WoodWorks, Marston Vale, nr Bedford

Fri 18th - Sun 20th Sept - Weald Wood Fair, nr Lewes, E.Sussex

Sat 10th - Sun 11th Oct - Wood Sale & Craft Fair, Ickworth House, nr Bury StEdmunds

Sat 31st Oct - Sun 1st Nov - Coppicing task at Bradfield Woods, nr Bury StEdmunds [Suffolk Wildlife Trust reserve, superb coppiced woodland under continuous management for centuries, and cited by woodland guru Oliver Rackham in many of his books.]

