

A summary of the work carried out in Linslade wood over the last 12 months

The purpose of this review is to give you an idea of the variety of work that has been carried out throughout the last 12 months in Linslade Wood by the Greensand Trust and our dedicated band of volunteers.

September–December: Work has finally concluded on the laying of the hedge in the new wood, this task was started a couple of years ago. This was a feature of the site prior to the wood being planted and to prolong its life the decision was made to lay it. In conjunction with this work the junction where this hedgeline crossed the main path has now been widened to improve visibility and improve the ground conditions during winter. At the same location 2 trees have been coppiced. One was an Oak that had had the top blown out of it and had suffered from Deer and Squirrel damage and the other was a mature Hazel that required coppicing. To minimize further damage from wildlife Deer baskets have been constructed and give another feature for visitors to find.



Volunteers constructing the Deer basket around the Oak using Hazel binders.



A photo of the Deer basket with some of the builders once the job was completed.

Hazel coppicing has continued across the site, this prolongs the life of the tree and also provides stakes and binders for hedgelaying in the wood and at other sites. This has taken place in the Hazel plantation in the new wood and in the plots immediately adjacent to the Soulbury Road Bridleway entrance.

March-September: With the start of the nesting season brash and vegetation clearance work ceases and work focuses on other aspects of the site. Grass cutting and strimming of the main footpaths and around the woodland furniture (benches, dog bins and access points). During the summer we installed several benches in the wood. Three of these can be found along the main path opposite the two copses of young sapling trees on the main ride and two alongside the newly laid hedge. We also took the opportunity to put mulch chippings along the length of the new hedge planted last February along the bridleway.



Digging the holes for the uprights of the bench on the main ride.



The bench building crew just giving it a test!

Last June it had become apparent that the access point at Alwins Field had become almost impassable in wet conditions. To improve this area the Friends of Linslade wood paid for resurfacing works using nearly 2 tonnes of type 1 MOT and also repaired the fencing over the culvert. This has improved this area dramatically although this winter's exceptional rainfall has shown that some remedial work is still required here.



Left to right: Alwins Field entrance before work started, during the resurfacing work and the finished article.

With nesting season over work returned to widening the path at the northern end of the wood, this particular area has always suffered when winter weather returns. Widening it will make it the same width as the rest of this path and will hopefully allow more sunlight in to allow the area allowing it to dry out quicker and spread the footfall. This work has currently paused while we are in the throes of nesting season but will restart next September.

With nesting season rapidly returning we managed to also clear encroaching vegetation from an overgrown drainage channel close to the Knaves Hill entrance to try and improve the condition of the path. This work is ongoing but a positive change in conditions has already been noticed during recent rainfall.

The final task carried out before nesting season curtailed work was the replacement of the Willow hurdles around the pond, the previous ones had been in place for a number of years but had finally collapsed, they have now been left to rot down.

In addition to the conservation work the volunteers carry out, we are fortunate to have a number of volunteer wardens who regularly visit the site and carryout litter picking to ensure it is clean, tidy and report any issues they find.

None of this work would be possible without the friends of Linslade wood volunteers, if you would be interested in joining them on a work party the posters are placed in the numerous information boards around the wood and on their social media page and website. Tools, hot drinks and biscuits are provided by the Greensand Trust.

You can contact our site ranger Gary Peach on 01525 237760 or via email at gary.peach@greensandtrust.org

