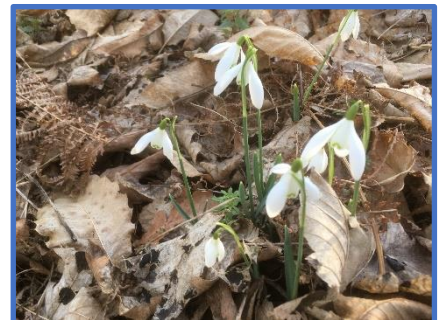




Hello Volunteers

As the summer issue was late going out, I have delayed the autumn one and combined it with a winter edition – well that's my excuse and I am sticking to it! Got lots of photographs of the busy vols again and not a lot of words. So, come all you readers you must have some great snippets of information that will interest us all that I can put in this publication in between the photographs. Above is a pic of one of our Stockgrove residents busy having "Found his Nuts" or seeds rather. One does not need to ask where? Because there are handfuls of seeds on the bridge posts.

In this edition: Stanbridge Meadow blackthorn removal; Stockgrove – new fencing and path clean-up by the bridge; Heather seed picking on Rannamere; 3 B's in small meadow in Heron Valley; Birch clearance on Rannamere (new restricted access sheep field); Christmas Tree Corral build & Christmas Tree unwrap and stack; Kings Wood ride cutback; Lord's Hill brash clearance 1; Rustic fence repair; Trench infill and new cycle route.



Wednesday 25th September 2019 Stanbridge Meadow

Blackthorn regrowth removal is the more usual task here in Stanbridge Meadow but we seem to have got on top of it and the last couple of visits has seen us attacking some of bigger stuff around the edges of the meadow. Today was one of those days right over in the corner where we have had a fire site during some of our earliest visits.



A damp day with problematic fire raising, even by the experts, whilst the 3 Red Poll Cows looked on. It was probably our last task under the watchful gaze of Jo before she moved on to 'greener pastures' – a little bird told me she was helping out at Dobbies (Fenny Stratford) after her short sojourn with Inland Waterways or was it Canal & River Trust.

Tuesday 15th September 2019

New fencing accompanied by path tidy and vegetation cut back around the bridge at Stockgrove Lake!



The next day (16th September) saw the Wednesday volunteers performing their annual task of picking heather seeds on Rannamere Heath.....



A rather tiring task and the volunteers were grateful for the doughnuts and biscuits during the well-earned coffee break.....



“Doughnuts help us to WORK, REST and PLAY”

Wednesday 10th October 2019

At the meadow end of Heron Valley, beyond the abandoned Christmas Tree plantation is a small fenced enclosure that is said to have some special flowers and mosses. Here the volunteers cleared the small birch trees and brambles.



Wednesday 13th November 2019

Another visit to the restricted access area of Rannamere Heath to, yet again, clear the birch trees. I'm convinced that Bob keeps putting them back just to keep us busy. But just when we think we have cleared them all – he finds some more for us to cut down.



Hopefully, the regrowth will be kept to a minimum now that the sheep are grazing the enclosure. They have been moved there from the open heath to protect them from dogs!



There's not mushroom here!



November 19th & 20th - Annual Christmas Tree Corral building and stacking



Wednesday 27th November saw the volunteers in Kings Woods cutting back ride edges along one of the rides. The area worked is perhaps the farthest one can get from the car park at Stockgrove. Needless to say, that after some wandering around, not sure of the actual site, it may have caused some to walk even further!



Cutting back the edges of rides in a scallop shape lets more light into the ride and encourages small plant growth.

Lords Hill Wednesday 4th December – Brash Clearing

Following the removal of more pine trees from Lords Hill, a mammoth task of clearing the Brash (branch trimmings) from the hill side. This was the first of many such tasks over the next few months.



Who was to know that the smoke from the fire (not this time) would get in someone's eyes!



Above - replacing rotten rustic fencing by the bluebell glade on Tuesday 26th November and below Tuesday 17th December, trying to fill in a trench dug by a contractor with a digger. The ground was so wet and clingy that we only managed to fill in the part where vehicles cross into the wood by the woodshed. The pipeline is planned to carry a control cable (fibre optics?) to the entrance barrier equipment! The pipe (in several bits) was laid, and a rope threaded through each piece to enable whatever to be pulled through when required.



Having exhausted themselves the Tuesday Volunteers went on strike and refused to do

any more filling in until the ground was dry or the contractor and digger returned to do the “filling in”.



Tuesday 8th December – the pioneers, under the guidance of Ranger Chris cut a new cycle route through ‘dense’ undergrowth.



The route runs from the blocked cycle track just before where the temporary hard surface road cut the original cycle route between the Greensand Way Path and the overflow-overflow car park to the field with the horse corral.

End Piece



Says It All!