



The Hogsmill News

Winter 2006-07

Editorial

2006 was a year of hard work for the HAG, 137 volunteers (approximately 450 volunteering hours) contributed to keep the Hogsmill Valley Walk clean of litter and general rubbish. Four main clean-ups were carried out, removing 93 bags of rubbish (500 kg) and at least 20 big objects such as trolleys, bicycles, and motorbikes.

On behalf of the Hogsmill Valley Walk, we thank the effort of all volunteers involved. Well done to you all.

It's the HAG New Years resolution to increase its number of members in 2007. You can help us with this by bringing in a neighbour, friend or relative to one of our activities and we will do the rest.

Making the HAG Website a reality

With volunteering support, we have created a website for the HAG.

www.kingstonepublish.org.uk/hag

The idea is that it becomes a community information site for people interested in the Hogsmill Valley Walk. The site is still in the early stages of development, and we would very much appreciate if you could have a look at it and give us your opinion. We are interested in learning what kind of information you would like to find on the site, as well as if you are interested in helping us to improve it. Remember it is a community site and we would prefer it is managed by you.

Seasons of the Hogsmill - Photographic Competition 2007



*Hogsmill Falls - Photographer: Richard Gooud
Hogsmill Photographic Competition 2006*

Now it is the time to take your winter pictures along the Hogsmill. So wrap yourself up, put on your boots and coat and get your camera, and set off to walk the Hogsmill. Remember, the competition is looking for iconic images of the different seasons along the Hogsmill Valley Walk. Images will be displayed in a temporary exhibition at Kingston Museum during the summer.

Details of the competition are available on our website www.kingston.gov.uk/hogsmill_photography_competition.htm or you could request your copy by contacting the Community Environment Officer on 020 8547 5347. While visiting our website why don't you check out the 2006 winning entries.

Bonesgate Improvement Project. A quick up-date

As part of the Green Arc-Bonesgate Improvement Project, a ecological survey, funded by RBK, has been completed. At the same time, The Environment Agency has been gathering data on the stream. The Lower Mole Project arranged for the eradication of the Japanese Knotweed which started in September 2006 and, volunteers from the Lower Mole Project have carried out work along the main path to clear back overgrown vegetation and to create several large open areas.

Public consultations to learn what changes residents would like to see around the area, are being carried out by partners of the project.

If you have a say, please contact Steward Cocker on:
SCocker@epsom-ewell.gov.uk.

What is on for the Spring

3 March

Clean up Day between Watersplash Close and Villiers Road.

We will be meeting at Watersplash Close at 10:30 am.

Bags, gloves, litter pickers and other materials will be provided. We will also provide refreshments.

29 April

Interpretation walk from the mouth of the Hogsmill in Kingston to where the Hogsmill rises in Ewell.

Toni Hodgson, local Medical Herbalist and Richard Jolly, RBK Neighbourhood Services Officer, who is a qualified Horticulturalist will be joining us to help us learn about the diversity of the Hogsmill. The walk will last approximately 4 hours, stopping for picnic lunch at the Bonesgate area. A Ranger from Epsom and Ewell will join us for the rest of the walk at that point.

Wear stout walking shoes or boots suitable for walking on muddy paths, picnic lunch and plenty to drink. Meet at Charter Quay Bridge, Kingston Town at 10:00 am.

Winter coughs and Welcome blooms

By Toni Hodgson, Medical Herbalist

While most of the countryside is bare over the colder months, one of the first bursts of colour arrives as the solitary flowers of Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*) appear with their welcome yellow blooms. The flowers appear in February, well before the leaves. As the leaves appear they are covered with a white felt-like down and resemble the shape of horse's hooves with soft, white woolly hairs underneath. I suspect that most gardeners don't consider the appearance of Coltsfoot as a welcome sight, as its creeping roots allow it to grow easily and become an invasive weed! However, it is one of the earliest spring flowers and the first sight of the flowers in the wild is a delight to Herbalists who have been using extracts of the plant for its medicinal properties for centuries. The flowers and leaves are commonly used as a cough remedy, as well as for other respiratory problems, either prepared in a syrup or as a liquid extract in combination with other herbs. So keep an eye out for the first flowers of the Coltsfoot in February - if you are too late you



may discover the white furry leaves long after the flowers have faded and you will have to wait another year to see the flowers bloom. But then you'll know where to look next year to find your own patch of Coltsfoot!

Toni is a qualified Medical Herbalist with clinics in Surbiton, Teddington and Twickenham. For more information Tel: 020 8390 4860 or email info@communityherbalist.co.uk.

And for the rest of 2007

May

Clean up day along Elmbridge Meadows

June

Himalayan Balsam pull along the Bonesgate Area

June

Clean up along Worcester Park Road, Tolworth Court Farm Fields

July

Vegetation maintenance task

September

Clean up - Lower Marsh Lane, Berrylands

November

Interpretation walk between Bonesgate and Tolworth Court Farm Fields

December

HAG Christmas Celebration

Interested in volunteering on week days?

Some HAG members have been asking for activities during week days. They feel that it will offer the opportunity to organise more clean-ups and other activities. From the Council point of view there is no problem in doing so as far as there are enough people interested in getting involved. If you are interested in volunteering during week days, please let me know by sending an e-mail to carlos.queremel@rbk.kingston.gov.uk or calling on 020 8547 5347.

If you would like to be kept up to date with regular news and information on the Hogsmill, or have any comments or suggestions, please contact the Community Environment Officer on 020 8547 5347, email environment@rbk.kingston.gov.uk or write to the address opposite.



Director of Environmental Services
Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Guildhall 2
Kingston upon Thames
Surrey KT1 1EU



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