



# The Hogsmill News

Summer 2007

## Editorial

As part of a small new project with Thames Water, we will be able to buy some new pieces of equipment for the HAG. Based on several requests from members, we believe that a couple of pairs of waders will be very useful for the group as they will allow us to get into the river and remove some of the stuff we haven't been able to remove in the past - so be prepared to put those waders on during the next clean up in September.

## A Green Spaces Strategy for Kingston

The Green Spaces Strategy (GSS) will set out Kingston's vision for using its green spaces over the next 10 years and beyond. Well managed and designed green spaces, whatever their size or location, should provide safe and attractive havens for people and wildlife. The management of green spaces is an important contributing factor to the interests of everyone, whether they visit them or not.

The proposed strategy will be developed around ten top line functions which have been set by the Countryside Agency in response to DEFRA's rural strategy 2004. Hanging from these ten functions will be our aims, objectives and outcomes that we will look to develop in the strategy.

A public consultation will be run during September this year. The process is designed to ensure that the local needs of each neighbourhood and their plans for the future are considered, whether it is for better recreational use, improved quality in standards of horticulture, or improved access into and around our green spaces. For further information, please contact RBK Customer Services.

## Invasive plants along the Hogsmill

In partnership with Thames Water, we have designed a one year project to develop and implement an action plan to control Japanese Knotweed along the Hogsmill River. We are currently looking for a group of volunteers to be trained on a three-day professional chemical spraying course during 24 - 26 October 2007. Trained volunteers will play a key role in the implementation of the project. If you are interested please contact our Customer Services Team, limited places are available.

Japanese Knotweed is not native to Europe, therefore the pests and diseases that control it in Japan are not present in the UK. In Japan, Japanese Knotweed grows in harmony with other plants and only grows to a fraction of the size that it does in the UK. Its vigorous growth excludes almost all of our native species, which can't compete with the tall summer growth or the thick mulch of decaying canes and leaves in winter. Many of the insects that are dependent on our native plants are also lost.

Japanese Knotweed spreads by means of stem, crown and rhizome (underground stem) sections. New plants will grow from the nodes of pieces of green stem, in soil or water. If stems are dried until they are dark brown, they will not regrow unless the crown (base of the stem) is still attached. The crown is able to survive drying and composting, and will rapidly produce new canes.

The most efficient way of controlling and eradicating this invasive plant is by spreading suitable chemicals. Japanese Knotweed in public land can only be controlled by professionals under the supervision of the local authority. If you have Japanese Knotweed on your land you should seek professional advice.



## What is on this summer?

**15 September @ 10:30am**

**Clean up day along Long Worcester Park Road.**

*Meet at the Hogsmill Pub at the junction of Old Malden Road and Cromwell Road.*

**13 October @ 10:30am**

**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.*

## Are you a regular volunteer for the HAG ?

*We want to know what kind of activities HAG people enjoy most as well as other useful information that would help us to organise the right events for you. Please fill out the questionnaire (if provided) or fill out online at [www.kingston.gov.uk/hogsmill](http://www.kingston.gov.uk/hogsmill)*

## Bumblebee Hunt

Bumblebees are one of the most charming and attractive groups of insect in Britain. Their fluffy appearance and gentle, bumbling flight is a common feature of our summer gardens and wildflower meadows. Bumblebees also have a crucial role to play in pollinating many of our flowers and agricultural crops, such as raspberries, apples and broad beans; and unlike other insect pollinators, they can be seen foraging out earlier and later in the day collecting nectar and pollen to feed their brood.

Despite their popular appeal, bumblebees have undergone a rapid decline in range and population – at least nine species are of conservation concern. The decline has been attributed to factors such as the loss of habitat from intensive agricultural farming, collateral pesticide damage, and insensitive development. This can only lead to further extinctions of British bumblebees. All is not lost, gardens, parks, and especially brownfield sites, also provide important flower-rich areas for bumblebees.

Buglife is running the first ever Big Bumblebee Hunt for London, Essex and North Kent - and they need your help to count bumblebees in your local area throughout July and August. To learn how to take part in this survey, visit [www.buglife.org.uk/bigbumblebeehunt](http://www.buglife.org.uk/bigbumblebeehunt) or contact Buglife on 01733 201 210.



## Seasons of the Hogsmill - Photography Competition 2007

Thanks to those who entered the competition this year, the quality of the entries has been really fantastic. Unfortunately the minimum number of entries required for running the competition was not met, and so regrettably the competition has been cancelled. We apologise for any inconvenience this might cause. This does not mean that we haven't appreciated the pictures and we will use them as appropriate. We thank Kingston Snappy Snaps for their sponsorship.

*Figwort Swig - June 07  
Photographer : John Fellowes*



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 Environmental Services Customer Care Team on 020 8547 5357, email [environment@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:environment@rbk.kingston.gov.uk) or write to the address opposite.



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