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October 2020 Newsletter

It's been a while since our last newsletter: in some ways the summer has been a quiet time in the Valley, not much to report - but change is afoot again. We have news of the improvements DWT have started on in the Valley, an update on the Northbrook consultation; thoughts on guided walks; some litter success; and introduction to our new Steering Group member.

We hope we will be able to arrange some conservation sessions as usual this winter, but it depends of course on the Covid rules. We'll get the word out if and when we can.



Autumn in the Valley Park

The valley is looking good - it always does of course, ever changing and now heading into autumn. The fields have all had a hair cut; the leaves are starting to turn red and orange and gold; fungi, like the ones pictured here, are appearing.

What's Going on Here?

You remember Devon Wildlife Trust won a Viridor Credits grant of £48,000? Covid restrictions delayed them starting on the work - but now its happening! Six fields are being roughed up ready for wildflower seed planting. By June next year these fields should give us a stunning display. Wildflower meadows have declined by 97% in the last 100 years, so DWT are doing a little bit to reverse that on our behalf!

And the scrape down near the Panny is being dug out to make it into a permanent pond, which should attract frogs, newts , dragonflies and all sorts of pond life.



Northbrook

This is the rather unprepossessing view you see from Topsham Road. But it could look so different in the next year or so. The plans to transform it are yet one more thing held up by Covid, but consultation should begin soon. DWT have made a short film, to which we were able to contribute, that can be used to start the conversation with local people. To remind you, the vision is for

- ‘Wild arboretum’ – the tree studded parkland would be enriched with wildflowers and newly planted standard trees
- Community orchard – orchard trees providing fruit for local communities to harvest.
- Wilding the Northbrook – new wetlands, ponds and pools to provide space for people to access the water’s edge and observe the range of wildlife
- Linking green spaces - DWT would manage the site to enhance its critical role as a green corridor between the Ludwell and Riverside Valley Parks

We'll let you know more as soon as we hear anything

Guided Walks

Over the last couple of months, we have offered guided walks to our Friends, with stories from the Valley's past and information about the wildlife. The people who have come on the walks have enjoyed them and encouraged us to think about offering them more widely, so we will be talking about it to DWT. Watch this space!



Litter

This may not be earth shattering news, but it is a minor success in our campaign to

keep the Valley and Wonford Playing Fields free of litter. After we did a litter pick with our friends from the Good Gym on Wonford Playing Fields back in June, we asked the City Council if they would put in a new litter bin at the entrance to the Playing Fields off the Topsham Road. And in September, they let us know it had been done.

Litter does seem to be much less of a problem than it was at one point. It feels like people are being more respectful of the Valley, but we know it is also thanks to the public spirited people who pick up any litter as they are walking round - thank you!

The Steering Group

As we mentioned in the last newsletter, we have deliberately kept the Steering Group small and informal. There were just four of us. But now it is five. Philippa Davies, who also brings her wonderful colleagues from Good Gym along with her when we need, has joined us. And brought the average age of the group down considerably!

We will be resuming regular meetings with Devon Wildlife Trust soon, so if there is anything you'd like us to ask them - or tell them - let us know - via Facebook or e-mail: LudwellLife@gmail.com

Ludwell Life is an independent community group, set up to protect and enhance Ludwell Valley Park
Our mailing address is: 50 Well Oak Park, EX2 5BB

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