

Dorset Countryside Volunteers



No 201
November 2023 - March 2024
Reg Charity No1071723
www.dcv.org.uk



Who we are, what we do, where, why and how . . .

DCV is . . .

- A practical conservation group run by volunteers since 1972 doing practical work in the countryside that would not otherwise be done
- Volunteers are male and female, all ages, from all walks of life and from all over the county
- Work is seasonal, e.g. heathlands and woodlands in winter, in summer dry stone walling, clearing ponds, footpath work, fencing
- Organisations we work for include: Dorset Wildlife Trust, National Trust, Natural England, Amphibian Reptile Conservation Trust
- We work at weekends throughout Dorset
- No super-human strength or special skills needed, or attendance on every task or even for the whole weekend - any time is a bonus for us and for you!

DCV offers . . .

- Practical care for the environment
- Opportunity to learn new skills - training given
- Use of all necessary tools
- Beautiful countryside, social events, fun & companionship

YOU should bring . . .

- Food, snacks for breaks and lunch, a mug for drinks, a bottle of drinking water.
- A basic First Aid kit, suitable for treating minor cuts, scratches, splinters, etc
- Hand sanitiser and/or sanitising wipes
- Face mask in case you need First Aid
- Stout footwear (steel toecaps if possible)
- Old clothes (wear layers) Long trousers and sleeves are best
- Tough gloves (we have some to sell/lend)
- Waterproofs, sun block, sun hat, insect repellent
- Don't forget an up to date tetanus jab

Reaching a task . . .

- Travel links: <http://www.morebus.co.uk/>
<https://www.dorsetforyou.com/travel-dorset/rail>

A DCV day lasts . . .

- 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m. approximately including

breaks for drinks (which are supplied) and lunch (please bring your own lunch)

FINDING DCV . . .

- Maps with the task programme (at the back of this newsletter) show the locations of task sites
- DCV website **dcv.org.uk**
- Look for DCV's yellow arrows near the worksite or the DCV information board may show an explanatory note
- If unsure of the worksite try to arrive before 10.00 to meet other volunteers. The worksite may be some way off. Lost? give us a call on **07929 961532** (after 10.00 a.m.) ring longer than normal
- If the phone goes to answer phone there is no signal on the work site

FOOD & DRINK

- Please bring your own lunch
- DCV provides free hot/cold drinks during the day - bring your own mug
- Occasionally DCV may hold a shared lunch or supper (aka bring a dish) when it is usual for people to bring some food to share around
- **Note:** If you have a medical condition or allergies of any sort, please carry a card and bring necessary medicines. If you wish, bring this to the attention of the task leader. Please complete the "in case of emergency" details at the end of the newsletter, and bring on task. "In case of emergency details" can be inserted into a small key fob which can be attached to your rucksack. Key fobs are available from Richard Meatyard.
- All youngsters are welcome, but should be accompanied by a responsible adult.
- **N.B.** Should you come? - If you or a member of your household has any Covid symptoms or has Covid as confirmed by a positive test then you must NOT come.

EDITORIAL



Welcome to the Autumn and Winter newsletter, one of our longest ever, covering November through to end of March, and it covers all our winter tasks. In a break from tradition, it was recently decided we would have just one winter newsletter covering all our cutting and burning tasks. Thank you Peter for organising this five month task programme - not an easy job. Our next printed version will be late spring into summer covering that season's work. An intermediate newsletter will go out by email. This is because of the difficulty in clients finding work for us in the early spring and allows us flexibility in booking tasks and sending them out to you.

Very many thanks must go to Gareth who is standing down as publicity officer after nine years. Another not so easy job, as it can involve a lot of effort for little gain - maybe months after a publicity event a person may come out and volunteer. Viv and Tess have agreed to share the job starting in the new year.

It was great to welcome our friends from Orchis once more here in Dorset in September and we all very much enjoyed a thoroughly successful, varied and busy weekend. Many thanks to Jane and John for organising it - read all about it, and see the photos, in this issue.

As membership isn't due until January we have decided to email out the new form then, so something to look forward to!

We've included a few reminders, training and safety . . please do have a read of all these to refresh your memory.

There are a number of ways of staying in contact with volunteers as well as coming on task. One of them is through the group email system set up by Richard some years ago. Use newsletter@dcv.org.uk (yes confusing, but it does go to the whole group). You can use this to advertise a social or walk that you may want to arrange. Best to avoid sending large emails or attachments - these will be held for approval by Richard. Bring your chit chat out on task! There is also the DCV Facebook page, (on public setting) courtesy of Tony Hogwood, for posting pictures, videos, messages etc. One doesn't have to join the group page to view the messages or videos, just have a Facebook account.

Finally and unfortunately the covid virus has not gone away - please remember: if you or any member of your household has covid symptoms or has tested positive for covid you should not come out on task or to any other DCV event until you have the all clear. Covid vaccination is being offered again this autumn and if you are eligible you are urged to have the jab!

Come out and enjoy our autumn and winter work and all that those seasons have to offer, fresh air, exercise, conviviality on task and Dorset's beautiful countryside.

CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT

Richard Meatyard

The late Spring and Summer are traditionally our season for construction activities and invasives management in which thistles seem to be becoming dominant. Perhaps an indication of our success in dealing with the other favourites, Ragwort and Himalayan Balsam.

Construction, which apart from one weekend dealing with gate repairs, revolved around fencing and steps, got underway with a fence task at Bracketts Coppice replacing a couple of very tired sections of roadside fence near Ryewater Farm.

The fencing theme continued the following weekend at Allington where we made a start on enclosing a second paddock for the goat club. A hot weekend with little shade and a poor attendance meant leaving the fence incomplete. Fortunately, we were able to take advantage of an unconfirmed Sunday a couple of weeks later to schedule an extra day there. This time with cooler weather, better attendance and a late finish we completed the fence.

The Sunday between took us to Upton Heath for the first of two sessions repairing steps there. Luckily, we largely escaped the storms that pounded much of the country that weekend and once the, elusive, materials had been tracked down the day progressed with only the occasional passing shower to dampen spirits.

The end of June saw the first of a couple of weekends tackling invasives starting at South

Poorton, where we did our best to free the reserve of creeping thistle and what little ragwort that remained. Into July and a split site weekend. Saturday we were clearing a mixture of marsh and creeping thistles at Loscombe. Then Sunday it was westwards to Fishpond and Himalayan balsam pulling in the fields around the pond.

Then a break from invasives until the end of August when a final weekend tackling invasives gave us an opportunity to visit a couple of new sites. Saturday, Diprose Dale and a morning of pulling Ragwort then an afternoon session of bracken bashing. Sunday, we moved a short distance westward to the DWT reserve at Happy Bottom for a soggy morning session of Ragwort pulling and track and path clearing. A drier afternoon followed clearing bramble from around the orchard trees.

The second weekend in July we returned to Upton Heath to continue the step repairs there. Saturday we completed the flights started on the previous visit and Sunday moved to the other side of the heath to rejuvenate a flight that was beginning to show its age.

A dire weather forecast, unfounded, for the following weekend resulted in dismal turnout on Saturday at Powerstock and we were only able to tackle two of the three gate repairs on the list. Turnout for Sunday was a bit better but the first gate on the list was more complicated than expected

and took the whole day to complete.

The third weekend in July brought the first visit of the year to Swineham and the continuation of the tree guard removal. A new track cut through the woodland had improved access. A second Sunday there at the end of August brought us to the point where the end was in sight. With the help of visiting ORCHIS members a final weekend there in September saw the removal of the tree guards completed.

The first weekend in August should have been our first visit to Sutton Holms but problems with the client getting materials to the site for the fencing meant a cancellation and a free weekend as notification came too late to schedule an alternative task.

A Sunday at Swyre followed this impromptu weekend off and with 3 new volunteers and above average for a walling session at Swyre, even with a few of the regulars missing. Surprisingly, we managed to complete the section from the previous visit and the new section started to give space for everyone to work.

Following on from Swyre came the first of two sessions on the steps on West Hill, Corfe Castle. A second session followed a few weeks later, when the very hot weather slowed work which is getting progressively harder the further we get up the hill. With another +50 steps installed the top of the flight is now in sight.

The first, unseasonably hot, weekend of September found us on the DWT reserve on Fontmell being gently roasted as we cut baby scrub on the steep slopes before rolling it in bundles down into the bank of larger scrub at the bottom. By contrast, two weeks later, a threatening forecast resulted in numbers for the Abbotsbury beach clean being depleted by cancellations. However, after a damp windy start with thunder rumbling away in the distance conditions steadily improved as the day progressed.

Another new site Weston Farm near Worth Matravers for the final weekend of September and a return to the step building theme when we made a start on creating a new flight of steps down to the Coast. Ground

conditions were good and we installed 30 steps over the two days but this is only the start as the total flight will be around 100 steps.

With October showing signs that we might be in for an Indian Summer we started our cutting season with a Sunday only session at Southwest Hyde, too dry for a bonfire. The theme of pine cutting continued the following weekend at Slepe Heath. This time, following a wet week, we were able to have a fire.

My thanks to all those leaders that have been volunteering their services in the past few months which has reduced the number of task days I have been having to lead significantly.

Finally, a reminder, we still need

more First Aiders. If you hold a current First Aid certificate, please let me know. If you would be interested in becoming qualified, there are courses available, including subsidised ones for volunteers available via the Dorset Volunteering Centre.

Richard Meatyard

Extra, extra, read all about it

*A message from Nigel Spring: it looks as though EuCAN are going to be responsible for the habitat management work at Curtis Fields SNCI in Weymouth at least for the next year or two. I wonder if the DCV could do a day or two for us this winter if you have any spare dates? There would be scope for the odd weekday too... I am going to try to do (machineless) volunteer work parties there on the third Friday of each month through the winter, with sessions when we'll use contractors with machines on other dates. Let me know whether you would like to be involved. Best wishes
Nigel Spring nigelsspring@yahoo.co.uk*

N.B. Curtis Fields falls under the designation of wildlife corridors and stepping stones - small sites of wildlife value and areas of habitat creation or opportunity forming links between existing sites or through urban areas.

Dorset Wildlife Trust are delighted to announce a second litter of beaver kits have been born at their enclosed beaver site in West Dorset. Eagle-eyed Conservation Officers captured these special images and videos of the two kits after closely monitoring the site throughout spring and summer. Two new kits have been recorded so far, bringing the family total to seven animals (two adults and five kits) which is an extremely positive sign that the beavers are continuing to thrive. During the project animal welfare is absolute priority, so they have ensured the 4-hectare enclosed site offers enough complex habitat to support the newly expanded beaver family.

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/conservation-work-land/dorset-beaver-project>

DCV Creech Heath summer & Nightjar walk

and a chance to see the heath in its full glory

It's been a while since DCV had an organised walk and so we took up the offer made by Amphibian & Reptile Conservation for a walk over Creech Heath to see some wildlife and hear the Nightjars calling. Following a picnic in the sunshine,



James the ARC ranger led us over a part of the heath we haven't worked on for some time.

James knows his plants and insects and walking slowly he showed us many wonders, including a Wasp spider in its bizarrely made web with a ladder shape through the middle.

He also carefully described in detail



the different types of heather on this heath, one of which is the rare Dorset Heath (*Erica ciliaris*).



In a damp patch we studied the carnivorous sundew plants, looking for insects that have become trapped and eventually consumed by the plant. Another highlight was the roosting



Silver studded blue butterflies, clinging to grasses overnight. They have a close relationship with the Black ant, who protect and feed the young caterpillars.

On the bare sandy patches we



came across pieces of red rock which were formed when a mineral called siderite (iron carbonate) mixed with estuary sands and clays to form ironstone.



On the clay banks where we had worked in the winter removing self sown pine trees, we admired the very pretty patterns made by the clay as it shrank in the dry summer.



As twilight fell, the strange "churring" of the Nightjars could be heard. We crept closer, suddenly they appeared in front of us flying and tipping their wings, but sadly no wing clapping this time.

We watched them fly and listened to their "churring" for over half an hour, what a wonderful experience.

Many thanks to James for giving up his time to show the heath in all its



summer glory.

NOTES OF TALK BY MARK WARNE OF FORESTRY ENGLAND

DCV AGM, 26 August 2023

Our AGM speaker was a superb choice. Now the Wareham Wildlife Ranger (with Landscape Recovery a late addition to his title!), Mark had 35 years of experience with Forestry England to compress into his well delivered talk.

What surprised many in the audience was quite what a major part deer played in his life. Why? The story starts with World War 1 which decimated UK woodlands and forests. 1919 witnessed huge replanting of our depleted tree cover, but this coincided with the decline of the grand houses with their deer parks. Guess where the deer went! And forestry everywhere suffered under their growing numbers.

Even today, control of their population is a major part of a ranger's day. But increasingly this work requires a full understanding of all the wildlife associated with the Forestry estate.

FE forests are divided into 'beats', and Mark has 'just' 4,500 hectares between Shillingstone and Wareham to care for. Much of this was planted in the 1950s, with many plantations on Ancient Woodland sites which now play an important role in nature restoration. These are prime habitats for deer of course, and if trees are to be grown successfully, Mark has to devote up to 40% of his time to reducing the damage they can inflict.

Sika deer, originally from China, are the most problematic

'escapees'. Here in Purbeck they have a stronghold, and are wily and tough animals. Not all landowners adjacent to his woodlands allow shooting, so there is always a pool of 500 or so animals to invade Mark's patch.

So amongst his many skills, he is a highly trained marksman, with an equally well trained dog to assist tracking these sizeable animals. But the good news (if not for the deer) is that those of us who do enjoy a little lean and healthy meat to go with our veg can always try to hunt it down at any good local butchers. All the venison safely enters the food chain, with 10% sold locally.

Grey squirrels aren't on Mark's Christmas list either, but he holds out hope that possible reintroduction of Pine Martins will save ammunition....

Many of Purbeck's pine forests were of course planted on our lowland heaths, ancient man made habitat. They are of course much more highly valued for their scarcity and wildlife value now and are being recovered where possible. Places like Rempstone are being cleared of pine and scrub and this is very time consuming (don't we know it! Ed.), But the survival of our rare Dorset Heath depends on it.

Together with other heathland owners, such as the National Trust and the RSPB, there is much being learned about the better management of this valuable habitat. The use of 'swaling' (controlled burning),

cattle and pony grazing, and even now pigs to rootle are now tools to help produce the 'mosaic' effect beloved of heathland species. Where animals cannot be used, tracked vehicles can be used to produce the scrapes and bare ground that invertebrates and sand lizards require.

This care to recreate habitats, and monitor results has produced surprises. One Phd study microchipping Smooth snakes under thousands of 'tins' has discovered they rather like Forestry sites as well ! We have a lot to learn.

And as for bats? Where are the best locations for bat boxes?

The answer is that they just don't care! But they do like a better mosaic of trees. Monitoring by ringing (do use gloves... *and only under licence*) to identify roosting sites and flight corridors undertaken with help from the Dorset Bat Group has now shown over 14 species using Mark's forest. New devices such as 'remote echo location' units, now cheaply available, are able to show where they are, and what species. Soprano pipistrelles are now known to be the most common.

Bird life also benefits from careful forest and habitat management. Tawny Owls are being studied with Danny Alders help, and the number of small raptors is growing. The Hobbys of course are rather partial to his dragonflies, and have even been found nesting in Corsican pines. And the star of the show is probably the return, and now

NOTES OF TALK BY MARK WARNE OF FORESTRY ENGLAND

DCV AGM, 26 August 2023
Cont'd . .

breeding, of the Ospreys in Poole Harbour. Mark quietly mentions he provided a helping hand to that success...

So with all this incredibly varied work, including now (perhaps belatedly) setting up a Forestry England group of volunteers, the message Mark makes is that FE is clearly not ALL about felling trees! Whilst important, timber production now has to be complemented with a forestry management regime that brings people on board too. Forestry Design Plans (which you can see online, with detailed maps) are now drawn up with local people and organisations having a say. Once agreed, his role is to make sure they work on the ground (just another job!).

And increasingly essential in all these plans is the need to build in resilience to the big challenges of Climate Change, and plant diseases. With an increasingly Mediterranean climate moving our way, how should the contradiction of non native species introduction vs existing ecological value be tackled?

And of course there is behind all this, the little matter of funding one of our prized national assets. (Editors note: remember the huge outcry when the

Government suggested the sale of our Forests?) Trees must go on being planted (mostly by hand!) and harvested (by efficient machines). Here the rationale for a big national forest estate lies, as it is able to continuously feed the large and efficient timber mills which need now to operate all year round.

[Editors note: Forestry England 2020/21 Report figures:

- * 1700 ha. Woodland replanted post felling.

- * 145 ha. New woodland planted.

- * 7 million trees planted

- * £90 million income

- * 296 million visits to FE land.

See forestryengland.uk]

So finally, Mark reminded us of the huge contribution to recreation made by local and national forests and woodlands. Generally access by the public is compatible with all the other things we expect our forests to produce (though we were reminded too of the awful Wareham forest fire....) Yes, there are problems, but that is what rangers are there to solve!

And just when the DCV audience were thinking this is quite enough for one Beat Ranger, Mark told us of that 'late arrival' to his job description, Landscape Recovery. In fact

this represents the welcome recognition by government of the need for much larger scale thinking when it comes to investment in biodiversity and landscape enhancement. Here in Purbeck the plan for this is called the 'Wareham Arc'. This joined up approach includes over 24 partners, including private estates and tenants, who are for the first time working closely together linking plans for coast and heath, and landscape and wildlife. Mark thinks this is most heartening.

And in response to a question, yes, there IS a rewilding team within Forestry England. Bison roaming in Purbeck? Watch this space....

This was an excellent talk by a truly overworked ranger, whose knowledge and commitment is a credit to his profession. He was well thanked (and fed...) for his presentation.

Terry Sweeney



Visit of ASSOCIATION ORCHIS to DCV September 2023



On the evening of Friday 22nd September, we were finally able to welcome our Orchis friends back to Dorset, after a very long gap since 2019 due to Covid restrictions! We appreciate the efforts of all the DCV hosts, who did a wonderful job of looking after their Orchis guests for the weekend.

On the Saturday we all joined in the task at Swineham, and removed huge numbers of tree guards. So many in the morning, in fact, that our services weren't really required in the afternoon! We thank Chris, who did his usual great job of providing picnic lunches on both Saturday and Sunday, and of course, all those delicious cakes baked by various members.

On the Saturday afternoon, we were able to take our Orchis guests to the Dorset Cider Farm, which was having an open day due to the Planet Purbeck festival that weekend. Ciders were drunk or tasted and we had a pleasant walk around the apple orchards, followed by some fun games set up by the farm, such as throwing rings over the cider bottles and an apple 'shy'.

In the evening we all met up at Winfrith Newburgh Village Hall for a very sociable and tasty evening meal. Thanks go out in particular to Helen G. for her catering and organising skills, and to her helpers in the kitchen, Helen Thompson and Carole Collins, also to Viv for the table decorations. There were some nice speeches from Orchis, and an amusing story from Anne-Marie about launching the new ferry from St Vaast to Tatihou island, of which she is now apparently officially "godmother"!

On the Sunday we separately entertained our guests in the morning, then met at Acton Lane in Purbeck for a picnic lunch in the field, followed by walking the "Quarryman's Way" path, including seeing the dinosaur footprints in the quarry, and the donkey winch at the old shaft entrance. The weather was kind to us, and it was a lovely walk, enjoyed by all. After the

walk we visited Worth Matravers, took a short walk around the village, then retired to the Square and Compass pub, where we were able to sit outside in the sun and enjoy a few bevies!

Sunday evening, we met up at Winterbourne Zelston Village Hall for a 'bring a dish' evening meal, with the usual mountains of delicious food! The Skittle alley was set up for us in the hall, and we had great fun playing different contests between the DCV and Orchis groups.

We waved goodbye to our guests early in the morning on Monday, and went back home for a well-deserved rest!

It was a very successful weekend, and we have since had some nice thank you letters from Orchis, saying how much they enjoyed it too. We hope to meet up with them again next year in France, and any DCV members are very welcome to join us for that visit, as we hope to keep this unique twinning of our two groups alive and well.

Jane Faulkner

DCV-Orchis weekend in pictures



Having made short work of the task...



a substantial lunch was called for



before sampling the cider farm

followed by a gentle stroll...



here be dinosaur footprints



Quarryman's Way proved interesting



3.00 lunch



flagging



keeping up the fluids



before a closely fought skittles match

A reminder for safety on the work site

Please Read

WELCOME to the cutting season - and with it, unfortunately, the possibility of a few accidents. Some, genuine accidents that just happen and seem unavoidable, others can be avoided with a little care.

REMEMBER it is the responsibility of everyone out on task to think about safety - their own and that of others around them. Here are some important tips and advice to help us all have an accident free winter.

- ◇ Wear stout boots or shoes, gloves and a protective jacket to prevent injuries to feet, hands and body. Be aware of the terrain, is it slippery or uneven.
- ◇ Wear protective goggles (ask task leader) to avoid a poke in the eye - something you'll want to avoid.
- ◇ Wear non flammable clothing especially when working near the fire. Many volunteers are now wearing fleece jackets, leaving the site with burn holes in them. Wear a hat when working on or near the fire. It's quite easy for sparks to land in your hair and singe it.
- ◇ Cut stumps of gorse, young pine and scrub as low to the ground as possible. This will prevent others from tripping and doing themselves a nasty injury. Ensure there are no trip hazards near the fire.
- ◇ Carry and use tools safely as instructed.
- ◇ Do not over exert yourself. Don't rush, you may trip.
- ◇ Always be aware of what is going on around you, are trees about to come down and are others working too close to you, or you too close to them. When felling trees, let other volunteers know before your tree is falling, don't be shy - shout out "Timber".



Tips for surviving the winter

Easy precautions we can take to help ourselves survive winter -

Check the DCV web site the night before the task to make sure the task hasn't been cancelled due to bad weather or the work location hasn't changed due to finishing the work on the Saturday.

Make sure you know where you are going. Find that task site especially if it is new to you. The maps we produce should have enough information to get you to the parking. If you are not sure where it is have a look on Google Maps or gridreferencefinder and type in either Postcode, OS grid reference or Lat/Long.

Is your phone is fully charged, the battery may drain quicker in cold weather. Use a waterproof bag to stop it getting wet. Don't rely on your waterproof jacket like Don did in 2017, expensive mistake.

Ensure you have enough fuel for the return journey and your tyres, oil and water are OK.

When driving beware of deep puddles, they may contain hidden debris.

Find out where your tow point is on your car and practise using the screw in towing eye.

Do bring an extra layer of clothing on task, sometimes the wind strips all your heat away.

Wet feet - spare socks in car. Also in wet weather bring an extra pair of gloves or consider buying waterproof gloves and a thin cotton inner.

Bring plenty to eat, cold weather uses more energy. DCV supply sugary biscuits for breaks.

If you have a problem driving in the dark, and who doesn't, then leave the site early but do tell the leader you are going.

Once parked look at the DCV white board with info and follow the small yellow arrows.

Cutting, snedding & fire lighting

A gentle reminder . .

With the cutting season here once more, a few basic hints and tips for safer, more enjoyable tasks, whilst maintaining DCV's good standards. Ask for more information on task . . .

But first - why?

Heathland - self sown pine trees, and gorse or birch, are cut to prevent heather being shaded out and to maintain the heathy habitat for creatures that live there.

Scrub bashing - scrub is the first stage in development from open habitat to woodland. Whilst some scrub is useful, for many of our clients removing unwanted scrub is a priority to maintain open habitats such as grassland, woodland, heathland with its associated diversity of flora and fauna.

How?

Cut stumps as low to the ground as possible.

If the base of the trunk is more than about 5 inches, cut at waist height and leave for chainsaw operator to finish.

Snedding - removing side branches

- ◇ Use a billhook for smaller branches, a bowsaw for larger
- ◇ Cut from the butt of the tree towards the tip
- ◇ Stand on one side of the tree whilst cutting branches from the other side – keeping the tree trunk between billhook and legs
- ◇ Large branches growing up from the trunk should be felled in the same way as trees
- ◇ Always sned as close to the trunk as possible to produce “clean” logs which are easier to handle, transport and stack
- ◇ Beware of a branch taking some of the tree's weight – the tree may move as the branch breaks. Roll the tree over before snedding

Brash: (as the cut material is now called)

- ◇ Pile cut material butt ends together, ready for dragging to the fire or stacking area
- ◇ Stack brash with cut ends towards the fire - but not too close
- ◇ Clear away brash from a large tree as you go, you may prefer to pile up several smaller trees before dragging it away
- ◇ Either way, if you cut the tree it is up to you to clear it – don't leave brash, either tidy or in a mess, for someone else to clear away

It is particularly important around the fire site to ensure that stumps are cut to ground level.

How tidy:

- ◇ Clear the site but don't over tidy. Dead wood, fallen and standing, is an important habitat and twigs, small branches, even larger pieces of wood will add to the biodiversity. Do not disturb dead wood, leave it where it is.

FIRE!!

Siting fires:

- ◇ Downhill of work - easier for dragging
- ◇ Where smoke won't blow across site
- ◇ Where flora is of least value; on old fire site; broad path; newly cleared area
- ◇ Watch out for overhanging trees which may get scorched
- ◇ On wet sites, choose driest place possible but beware of dangers of peat smouldering below ground
- ◇ Try to avoid smoke blowing across roads
- ◇ Find out if there is a water source nearby

Advise fire control

- ◇ Have beaters to hand
- ◇ Ensure area around fire site is free from trip hazards

Fire lighting

An experienced person should be in charge of lighting and loading until fire burning well.

Useful items

Dry paper or card
Firelighters
Thin, dry wood

- ◇ Air - wind or breeze - is needed to help draw the fire. Raising the fire on logs will help air get to the base
- ◇ The closer together wood lies, the better it will burn
- ◇ Once fire burning well, gradually increase size of dry wood to achieve a good hot ash base

Feeding the fire

- ◇ Stack cut branches butt end towards the fire for ease of loading
- ◇ When the fire is going, feed it with branches cut so that they lie flat on the fire.
- ◇ Make sure branches are cut up and will lay flat - the wood will only burn if in contact with other burning wood
- ◇ A fire can burn out under a tangle of ill-cut branches. If the fire is dying, you may have to pull it apart and start again
- ◇ Lay branches on the fire with their butt ends to the wind allowing a free flow of air into the heart of the fire and helping branches pack down better
- ◇ Decide what size the fire should be, don't keep piling wood on so that the fire becomes too big and out of control
- ◇ Allow plenty of time for the fire to burn down so that it is safe to leave
- ◇ At the end of the day you may wish to douse the area surrounding the fire with water
- ◇ Phone fire control to tell them the fire is safe and that you are leaving the site



DCVs 50th anniversary hedge

Doug Kite

Last year saw DCV reach a 50 year milestone in its history. To mark these 50 years we thought it would be good to do something that left a legacy for DCV members into the future and also enhance people's enjoyment on a countryside visit. From much thinking we homed in on planting 50 trees in a particular place or perhaps along hedgerows. Finding a suitable place proved difficult, but the idea of something to do with hedgerows stuck given DCV's long history of hedgelaying and, on a few occasions, hedge planting.

By chance, on a visit to the Dorset Wildlife Trust visitor centre at their Kingcombe Meadows reserve (now part of Kingcombe National Nature Reserve) there was a large field scale map from the 19th century covering the present-day reserve and, alongside, a map of the fields today. And that provided an idea!

One of the most striking features of Kingcombe Meadows is its network of tall, thick hedges. There are nearly 200 in total, measuring about 11 miles in length. They are mostly made up of hazel and thorns with also many fine oaks and curious old 'mocks' of ash – their gnarled and twisted trunks covered with lichen and moss. Looking across the valley setting of the reserve one sees a wooded landscape very different from the open field landscape on surrounding farmland. Much of this difference is due to the

close-knit network of big hedges and the spreading crowns of hedgerow trees.

However, looking at the two maps there was a difference. Despite the dominance of hedgerows in the Kingcombe landscape today, even more field boundaries were shown on the 19th century map and, at that time, these were almost certainly hedges. Presumably over subsequent years they had been grubbed out to give a few bigger fields. There were 6 lost hedges. Could DCV put back one of these lost hedges? A fitting legacy, especially with DCV's long association with Kingcombe and great many tasks managing its hedges.

Armed with the idea we approached DWT. They were enthusiastic, especially as DCV were prepared to fund the work and they had already contemplated putting back some of the lost hedges. A site visit was arranged to sort the detail. Very soon it became apparent that putting back a hedge in the style of Kingcombe's hedges was far from straightforward. There needed to be a hedge bank and possibly a ditch – any hedge bank marking the lost hedges was gone, only flat grassland remained - new fencing both sides to protect the hedge planting from livestock and then in dividing a field there needed to be a new gated entrance and probably a new, laid in water trough. This all seemed too much.

Fortunately, our friends at DWT had an idea that overcame all this. They knew of a hedge on the reserve, or rather what should be a hedge but wasn't. The hedge bank and fence existed, and hedgerow trees, but not the hedge, or at least much of it. And so it was that this hedge that isn't a hedge is to become DCV's 50th anniversary legacy.

The 'not yet a hedge' is about 125 m long forming a boundary to a field, 'Middle Keeches Common', and running past is the Jubilee Trail long distance footpath. Part is tall coppiced hazel, the rest mainly tall, dense bracken with a few struggling thorns, out of which rise a couple of magnificent oaks.

Putting the hedge back and into healthy growth will take time and periodic tasks over a number of years. We have two tasks this winter. We need to convert the hazel coppice to laid hedge and, before planting the new section of hedge, give the struggling thorns some tlc and, most importantly, deal with the dense bracken. Dense bracken would quickly smother out a newly planted hedgerow so it needs to be gone, or at least most of it. Then, later, we can put in the hedgerow which will reflect the composition in nearby hedges – a mix of mostly hazel and thorns with some less common components such as crab apple and field maple.

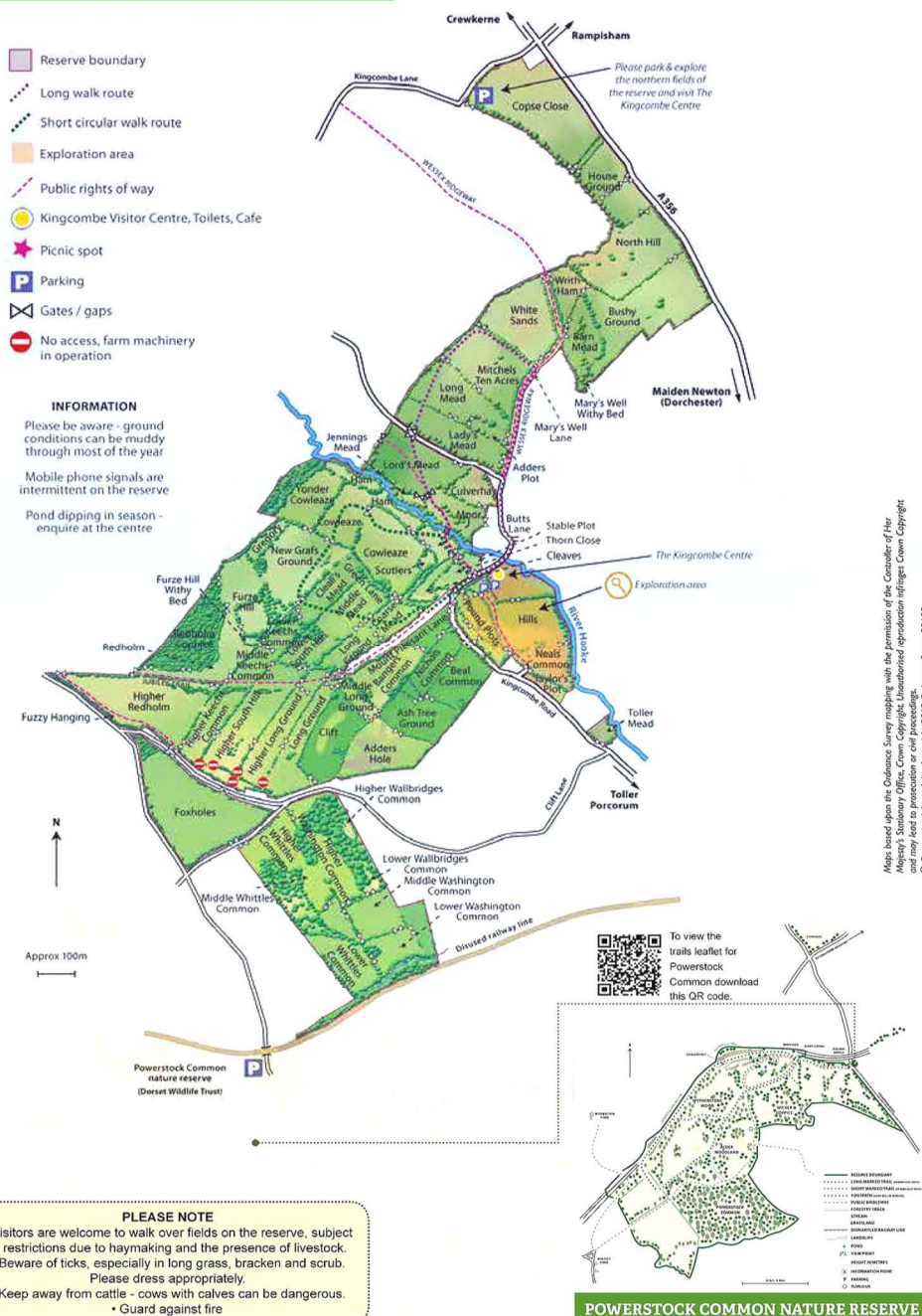
The plan is to put back the hedge in as sustainable way as

cont'd . .
Doug Kite

possible. The hedge plants are mainly being sourced using what's available locally from self-sown regeneration, the hazel coppice can provide stakes for protecting the more valuable hedge plants with re-used tree tubes and ties, while the rest we will protect with thorny dead hedging cut from blackthorn sprawling out into the field from

the hedge opposite. And to assist in reducing our carbon footprint and to improve what will be sparse hedge bank habitat for nature until the hedge matures, we shall use the larger cut hazel to provide dead wood habitat.

KINGCOMBE MEADOWS NATURE RESERVE



DCV have a number of tasks for Dorset Wildlife Trust in West Dorset this winter. Three tasks at Powerstock controlling the spread of scrub and increasing the grassland areas for rare plants and butterflies, and two tasks at Kingcombe starting a new project to bring life back to a derelict hedge.

These two large reserves, Kingcombe 180ha and Powerstock 112ha, very nearly touch and together were designated a National Nature Reserve (NNR) by Natural England in 2021.

The value of hedgerows

***Hedgerows**, a defining feature of our countryside, with deep and significant cultural and historical importance - as we know from the hedges at Lower Kingcombe. Hedges tell the story of our farming traditions over many centuries and add to regional distinctiveness.*

From a wildlife point of view hedges are invaluable, providing safe havens, "corridors" between ecosystems for flora and fauna. The most widespread hedge shrubs, hawthorn, blackthorn and elder, are essentially scrub plants adapted to colonise open land. Other species found in a hedge probably indicate a woodland origin, eg hazel, spindle, field maple.

The more plant species found in a hedge, the greater the number of other species the hedge can support. A good example is the thrush which nests in the shrubby structure of the hedge, sings from hedgerow trees, hunts snails in the base of the hedge before swapping to berries later in the season

At ground level perennial herbs flourish, cow parsley, hedge parsley. Plants indicating woodland origin include dog's mercury, bluebell, primrose, wood anemone, wood spurge. Birds, small mammals, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates use the hedgerow for haven, home or food - over 100 types of moth feed on hawthorn alone and nearly as many utilise blackthorn.

A hedge neglected or constantly flailed, becomes gappy at the

base and soon deteriorates into the remnant hedge all too frequently seen in our countryside today. Laying, together with selective mechanical trimming, rejuvenates the hedge, ensuring a long and healthy life, a sound barrier and diversity of wildlife. How a hedge is managed affects the abundance of food it can supply, regardless of the species within. Most of our hedge species flower and fruit on second year wood, so any hedge trimmed to the same point each year will not be able to produce anywhere near so many flowers or fruits.

Benefits of hedges

Wildlife corridors, shelter, food,

Prevent soil erosion, wind damage

Encourage pollinators, reducing need for pesticides

Shelter livestock

Store carbon

Sense of place - as at Kingcombe

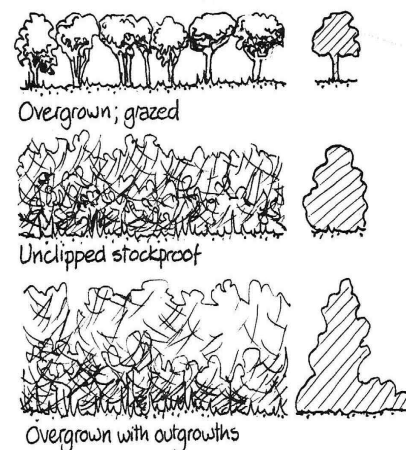
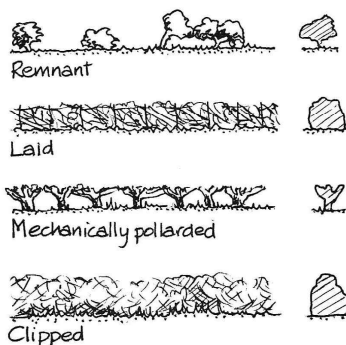
Hedgerow trees

Over half the priority species associated with hedgerows are dependent or partially

dependent, on hedgerow trees. Hedgerow trees, particularly old trees offer nesting sites for birds bats and bees, they contain the rare deadwood habitat that supports thousands of our invertebrate species, many of which are rare or threatened, and they provide leaf, flower and fruit forage for a huge number of species. Oak and willow trees can support over 400 plant eating insect species each, which then go on to support a large part of the local food chain. Whilst undoubtedly mature and ancient hedgerow trees offer more for wildlife than young trees, it is essential to ensure that a new generation of trees is encouraged. It is all too easy for a mechanical flail to strim the top of a potential new sapling tree, so these need protection and care if they are to become the mature hedgerow trees of the future.

HEDGE TYPES

(after Pollard, Hooper and Moore, 1974.)





Return to PARLEY COMMON

Dorset heathland -

internationally important, home to a diverse range of flora and fauna, sometimes dismissed as wasteland, these often vast tracks of atmospheric wildness, full of colour and life in warmer months, hold a beauty wild and raw during wintertime.

DCV returns to Parley Common in east Dorset, so close to the edge of the Bournemouth Poole Christchurch conurbation whilst maintaining the unique and typical flavour of the wild heath. Three more tasks here this quarter, three more opportunities to explore this large heath of historical firsts, a great place to see some true wildlife rarities.

Heathland results from a diverse combination of circumstances - thin impoverished soils of sand, gravel, clay, continual leaching of nutrients, human activity - from the Mesolithic right up to today's gravel and clay extraction.

The Reserve, 107 hectares, owned by Amphibian & Reptile Conservation (ARC)/Ferndown Golf Course/Diocese of Salisbury - Site of special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Area of conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar.

Once part of a much larger complex of heathland joining nearby St Catherine's Hill and Ferndown Common, due to urbanization these areas now remain isolated. The Common stretches from West Parley to the late 20th century Tricketts Cross estate, renamed Heatherlands. In the 1600s Parley Common was divided into distinctive long, narrow strips to extract peat turf for fuel. With some areas being

wetter and poorer than others, the strips allowed for a fair share of peat, one strip was nearly 2 miles long and but only 22 yards wide.

What to see - Parley Common is home to an abundance of all six native species of reptile, due to large areas of prime habitat; extensive south facing dry heath with dry exposed sandy areas, ideal habitats for sand lizards and slow worms, wet to dry heath interfaces perfect areas for common lizards and smooth snakes, scrubby boundaries loved by adders and a small stream that runs along the eastern edge frequented by grass snakes. Frogs, toads and newts frequent the wetter areas.

Some interesting firsts - late 19th century the now extinct mazarine blue butterfly (*Cyaniris semiargus*) was first discovered. The large bagworm (*Pachythelia villosella*) and the ringed carpet moth (*Cleora cincaria*) were also first discovered here, as was the smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*), first recorded in Britain on Parley Heath in 1853. But the discovery of the speckled footman moth (*Coscinia cribraria*) in 1820 really put Parley Common on the map. Other oddities include the first possible record of ground nesting peregrine falcons and, pre-construction of Tricketts Cross/ Heatherlands, where records of sightings of the ladybird spider (*Eresus sandaliatus*) exist.

Source: <https://www.arc-trust.org/parley-common>

Nearby ancient history - worked flints and axe heads from Mesolithic (10,000BC) through to Neolithic (5,000-2,000BC) have been found on northern terraces

of the Stour, Bronze Age (2,000-700BC) barrow burial mounds remain.

From Saxon to Middle Ages the open system of farming prevailed, the heath used for grazing and providing wood and turf for fuel. In the 16th century the land was parcelled up into farms resulting in new farming methods and improved output. The heath was left unenclosed until 1633 with local yeoman farmers being given ownership of long strips of land in a north/south alignment reflected in the landscape even now.

Numerous tracks crossed the Common indicating usage and movement of livestock to market. Better houses, such as the larger farmhouses, were built in brick from clay fired locally but many smaller dwellings were built of cob with heather roofs that fell into disrepair if not maintained. In the 1920s it was estimated that some 40 cottages in the area had been lost within living memory. As the 20th century progressed, so did the amount of development along the edges of this tract of once wild heathland.

Source: <https://westparley-pc.gov.uk/>

DCV forthcoming tasks at Parley

4 & 5 November
2 & 3 December
6 & 7 January

Thursday 6th July following a picnic DCV members enjoyed a walk searching for nightjars at Creech Heath. It was a beautiful calm evening and the nightjars performed well.

Saturday 26th August the AGM at Winfrith was well supported and in addition to the usual food and business of the meeting Mark Warn from Forestry England gave a very interesting talk describing his role which sadly seemed to involve a lot of time culling deer to stop them getting out of control.

The weekend spent with Orchis was very successful.

This newsletter will cover socials well into the new year so not all details are confirmed.

Thursday 16th November a soup evening with

Helen. I will prepare a few soups with bread etc and if you wish you can make a contribution to the cost. Please bring a bottle of your choice and let me know if you would like to attend.

Saturday 16th December the Xmas meal will be held at Winfrith village hall from 5.00pm onwards. Please bring a drink of your choice, a gift for the Secret Santa worth approx. £2 and inform Helen G if you would like to attend.

January bring a dish event was suggested but no detail confirmed

Tuesday 13th February annual Pancake Day celebration to be held at Peter's from 7.30 onwards. Please bring a filling and bottle of your choice and let Peter know if you would like to attend.

DCV 50th Anniversary T Shirts

We have a small stock of these available. They are free to new paid-up members (a great deal, join for £3 and receive a T Shirt valued at £6.50 while stocks last). Existing and new members can purchase additional T Shirts at £6.50. Just a handful left in sizes S/L/XL. Sorry no medium ones left.

DCV Hats - stock clearance

These DCV hats are available from stock. The price of hats from our supplier has increased during the past 18 months, so our stock at old prices gives good value.

Available as of September 2023 are:

Baseball hats, cotton, - adjustable size, navy blue or bottle green. 2 in stock. £6.50 each.
Fleece ski hats, polyester - single size - red, royal blue, navy blue, 3 in stock. £6.95 each.
Bucket hats, double layer cotton - S/M - navy, light stone, 2 in stock. £8 each.
Bucket hats, double layer cotton - L/XL - olive, white, black, light grey. 5 in stock. £8 each.

DCV members (who have paid the annual membership fee) get a £5 discount off these prices.

Bucket hats are multi-purpose - lighter colours make good sun hats, larger ones covering the back of neck and ears on most people. As they are double layer they can take a waterproofing treatment well by using a nikwax type product or they can be waxed 'barbour style'.

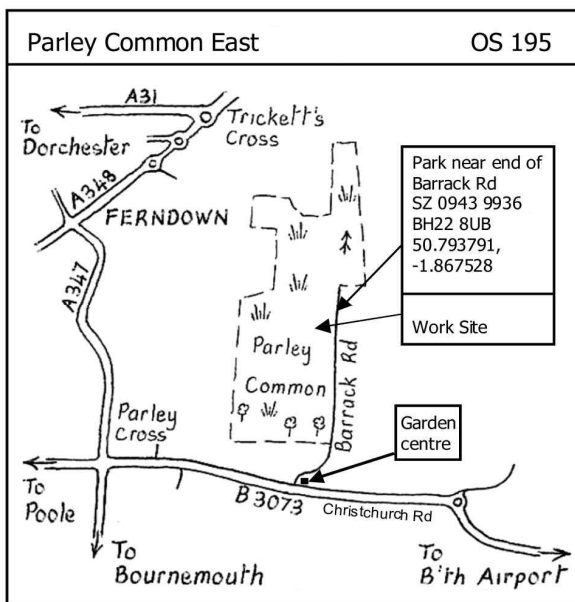
It is best to try the bucket hats for size, so please let me know if you might like one of these. We can try to meet up on a task for you to try them for size.

Shirts and hats can be double wrapped and left in the trailer to collect on task.

Contact Gareth at DCVpublicity@gmail.com or text/voicemail 07923 498760 to order.

DCV TASK PROGRAMME : November 2023 - March 2024

For all tasks please check DCV web site <http://www.dcv.org.uk/>
for updates in case we finish the planned work and move to a different site.



4 & 5 Nov: Parley Common. (ARC) East Dorset

The Pines don't rest in their quest to dominate Dorset's heathlands, so nor can we rest. At least not until a good day's work is done and we may be able to enjoy standing around the glowing embers of the fire as night draws in.

This is the first of three tasks at this lovely site. See article in this newsletter.

We have cleared some quite large areas of pine from Parley Common in the last few years, but it is a big area, and there is always more to do!

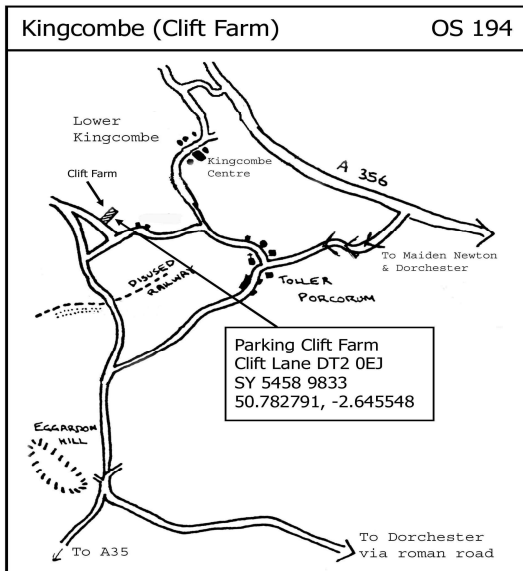
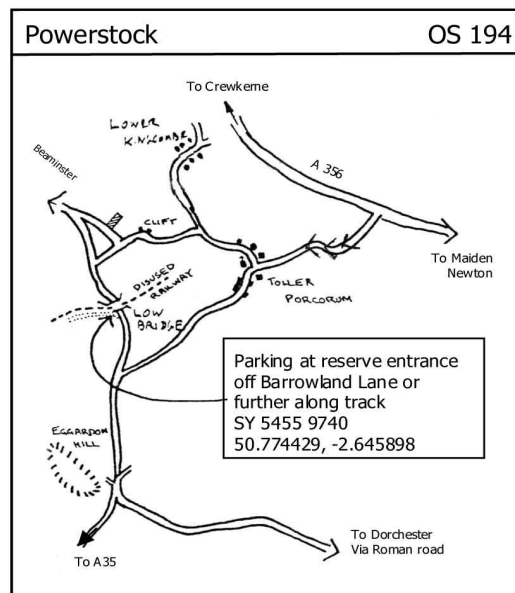
NB: Park & meet at the gate near the end of Barrack Road. This is the long track that leaves Christchurch Road by the In-Excess garden centre.

11 & 12 Nov: Powerstock Common (DWT) West Dorset

This large and diverse reserve is a rich mix of open rough grassland, scrub and woodland. Previously a Royal Forest, an unenclosed common, a forestry plantation, it is now part of the Kingcombe & Powerstock NNR. For centuries, landscapes like this have been maintained by people for grazing & wood products, and the ecosystem has evolved to use this. So it is not self sustaining without some help - and as usual that is where we come in, to keep that old balance of scrub & grass - unenclosed rough pasture where cattle roam among scattered trees and native woods.

We will be pushing back some islands of scrub in our traditional way, with bowsaws, loppers and a bonfire.

NB: Meet at the car park by the padlocked gate as usual. We can drive into the reserve - the first site is not far down the good forestry track.



Sunday 19 Nov: Kingcombe (DWT) West Dorset

It was the DCV's 50th anniversary in February 2022. By way of marking that occasion we had the idea of restoring an old hedge on this farmland reserve, now a maze of flower rich fields criss-crossed by old hedges and copses so valued by wildlife. The logistics of doing this properly caused a bit of delay, but this Winter sees the start of our new project.

Stage one is to lay the small amount of hedge that is layable, and do some preparation work on the rest, though it is not heavily scrub covered, so it should not be too much hard work.

NB: Meet at the parking area at Clift barn, off Clift lane. It is a bit of a walk in to this site in the middle of a quite remote part of this beautiful reserve.

DCV TASK PROGRAMME : November 2023 - March 2024

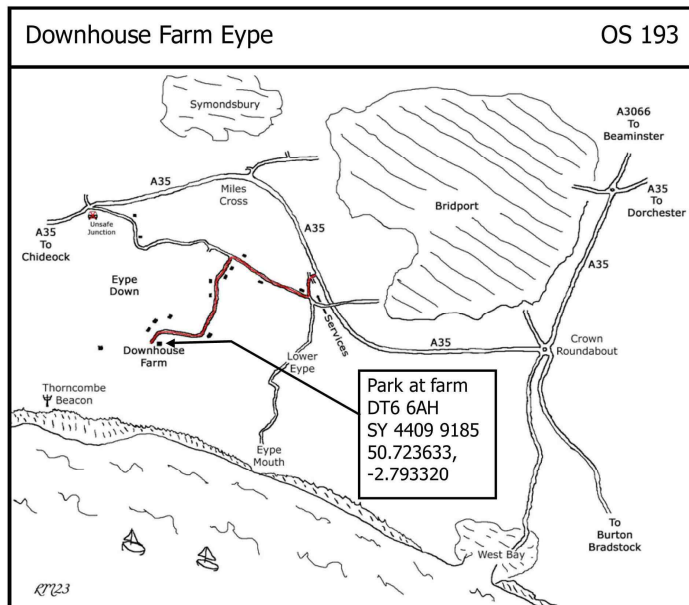
25 & 26 Nov: Downhouse Farm (NT) Nr. Bridport

Our first visit this winter to this site on Golden Cap Estate with sweeping views of west Dorset countryside.

The primary job here is tree planting. This is part of a scheme to improve the wildlife value of what was improved farmland, by planting thick hedges of flowering trees like Hawthorn, Dog Rose & Crab Apple. This will use natural re-generation (re-wilding), mixed in with some planting. A nice opportunity to plant some trees.

This task depends on the nursery being able to lift the saplings in time, which is weather and demand dependant. So it is possible the work may change to scrub control either at Downhouse, or not too far away. Please check for emails or website updates.

NB: There is a reasonable amount of parking around the farm buildings, at the end of Downhouse Lane.



2 & 3 Dec: Parley Common (ARC) East Dorset

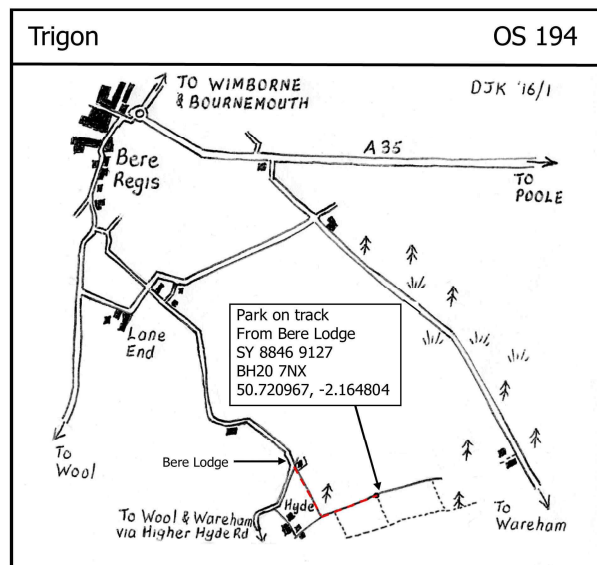
We have cleared some quite large areas of pine from Parley Common in the last few years, but it is a large expanse of heathland and there is always more to do! This is the second of three visits here this winter.

NB: Park & Meet at the gate near the end of Barrack Road. This is the long track that leaves Christchurch Road by the In-Excess garden centre. For map see task 4 & 5 November.

Sunday 10 Dec: Downhouse Farm Nr. Bridport (NT)

This will be continuing the tree planting. For map see task 25 & 26 Nov.

There remains a small possibility the trees will not be available, so check before setting out, for any changes.



16 & 17 Dec: Trigon (ARC) Nr Bere Regis East Dorset

The different name may seem like a ploy to make it sound like a very different site to SW Hyde, our first Winter pine cutting task. In reality it is just along the track from our usual parking, about 400m away!

However for a real difference, this weekend could be a good time to collect a free Christmas tree of any size you want, and to enjoy a few Xmas goodies, well deserved after all the hard work. Plus there is the famous DCV Christmas dinner in the evening to look forward to.

NB: There is ample parking along the firm but rather pot-holed track leading to the site. Enter from the Bere Regis end at Bere Lodge (not the road from Trigon), & go past Pear Tree Cottage onto the Heath.

Sunday 31 Dec: Powerstock Common (DWT) West Dorset

This task will be continuing with the work to open up the grassy glades between the trees and wanted scrub, to keep the mix that is so beneficial to wildlife.

We are likely to be working on the same area as in November, but if we are not there, the 2nd site is quite a long way down the forestry track. If you are late phone DCV mobile for gate code.

NB: For map see task for 11 & 12 Nov

DCV TASK PROGRAMME : November 2023 - March 2024

6 & 7 Jan: Parley Common (ARC) East Dorset

This is our third, and probably last task visit to this important heathland area this winter. It is a large site, but hopefully we will have made a big impact on it, with wide expanses of pine free heath to admire.

NB: For map see task 4 & 5 November

13 & 14 Jan: Fontmell Down (DWT) North Dorset

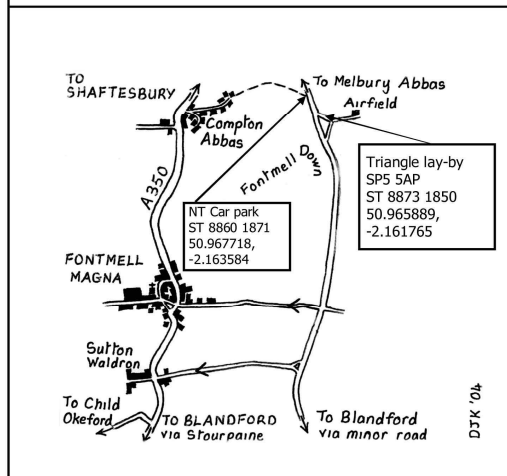
This weekend a return to the high chalk downs with far reaching views over the Blackmore Vale and home to some of the best chalk grassland in Dorset supporting a diverse range of flowers and butterflies.

The work here will be continuing with the path clearance along the lower part of Big Bury, started in October. Scrub on a DCV bonfire gives off a good heat, and on a cold day at a possibly exposed site, this can be very welcome during our tea & lunch breaks. It is also very useful to boil kettles!

NB: Either park at the triangle by the airfield road, or at the NT Compton car park further north, and walk back along the path beside the road.

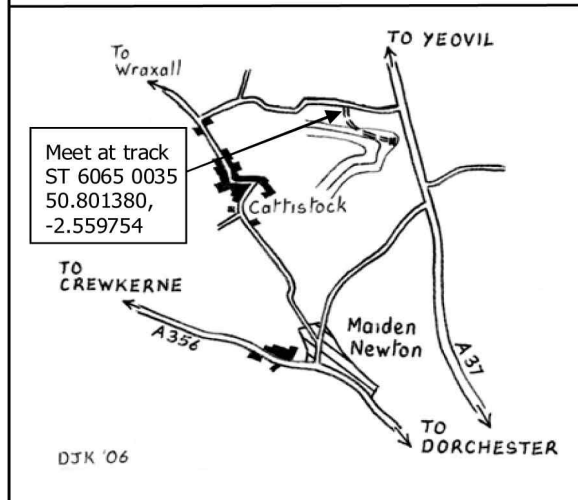
Fontmell Down

OS 183



Lankham Bottom

OS 194



Sunday 21 Jan: Lankham Bottom (BC)

Another lovely chalk downland site, to continue with the scrub control started in October.

This is a Butterfly Conservation grassland reserve and as usual, we are helping to keep the scrub under control. If that is possible when dealing with bramble and thorn, which are all too good at fighting back! So we will be again cutting and hopefully burning a patch of unruly plants, for the benefit of the butterflies and the multitudes of other plants and animals living on this site.

NB: There is parking inside the gate at the top of the track down to the pumping station and more parking near the bottom of the track, which is a bit bumpy in places, with lots of loose stones. However it is driveable with care.

27 & 28 Jan: SW Hyde (ARC) Near Bere Regis

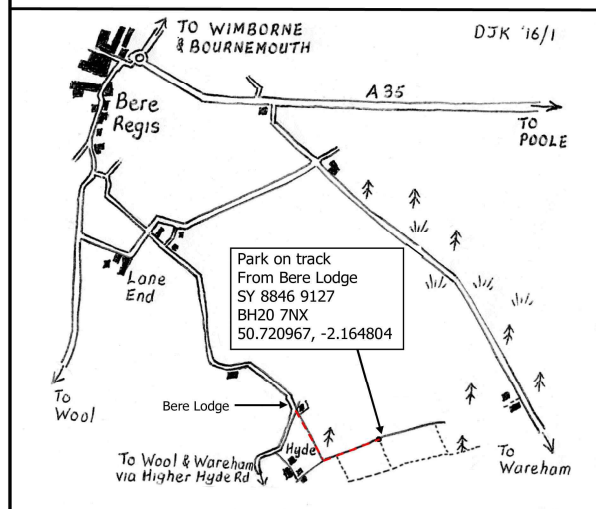
This weekend we continue with the work from October, though only a pine cone's throw from the Trigon site, of course!

We return to the very ecologically valuable job of controlling invasive vegetation that will degrade biodiversity if left to spread. Pine clearing on Dorset's internationally important Heaths has always been a staple of the DCV work, and this year will not change that!

NB: There is ample parking along the firm but rather pot-holed track leading to the site. Enter from the Bere Regis end at Bere Lodge (not the road from Trigon), & go past Pear Tree Cottage onto the Heath.

South West Hyde

OS 194

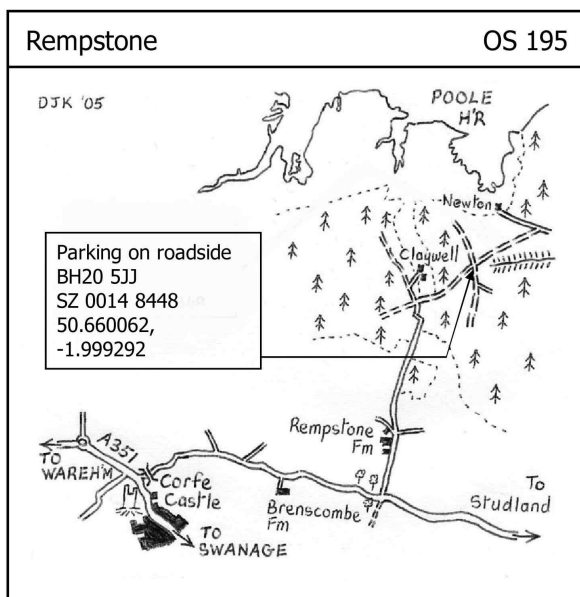


DCV TASK PROGRAMME : November 2023 - March 2024

3 & 4 Feb: Rempstone Forest (Rempstone Est.) Purbeck

Once largely pine plantations, large areas of this private estate have been cleared, reverting to rough grass and heath. This creates a valuable wildlife haven in a strip linking Arne & Hartland Moor to the Studland heaths. On this weekend we have been asked to clear mostly gorse along one of the estate roads, both for wildlife benefit and to create a fire break. This road will be familiar to many volunteers, as it leads to Newton Gully.

NB: Turn off the Studland road at the cross roads on a little summit, and if early, wait by Rempstone Farm. Otherwise follow the signposted route to the electric gate, and phone the DCV mobile for the gate code.

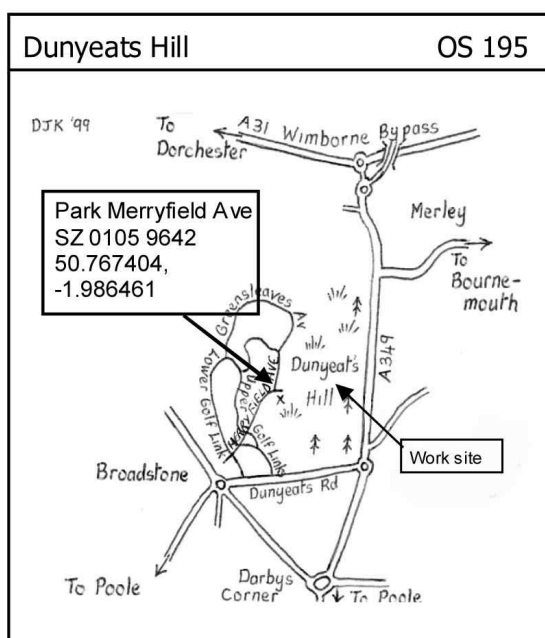


10 & 11 Feb: Powerstock Common (DWT) West Dorset

This will be our 3rd visit to Powerstock this quarter, and we expect to be working a lot further along the forestry track, past the double gated cattle pen.

Here there is a long strip of scrub, that the DWT want to push back to open up a bigger grassy area.

NB: For map see task for 11 & 12 Nov. If late, phone for the gate code (unless unlocked), to avoid a long walk in.



Sunday 18 Feb: Dunyeats (ARC) East Dorset

We return to the job of saving Dorset's heaths from invading Pine trees - but for added excitement, this is a site we have rarely visited, and the may include some birch clearing.

The site is adjacent to Canford Heath, separated by Gravel Hill main road, which some plant and animal species can cross. However many species are now isolated, making proper management all the more important.

NB: Park in or near the 2nd Cul-de-Sac on the right in Merriefield Ave, which you get to from Dunyeats Road via Upper Golf Links Road. Please take care not to obstruct any house access.



24 & 25 Feb: Kingcombe NNR (DWT) West Dorset

We will be continuing with the Hedge restoration project started in November. There is an article about this site in this newsletter. See map and details 19th November.

DCV TASK PROGRAMME : November 2023 - March 2024

2 & 3 Mar: Fontmell - Brandis Down (DWT) North Dorset

This site is separated from the main reserve by the little road down to Fontmell Magna. Being North facing it can be "bracing" in Winter, but in March there is a chance we may get a bit of sun if the sky clears.

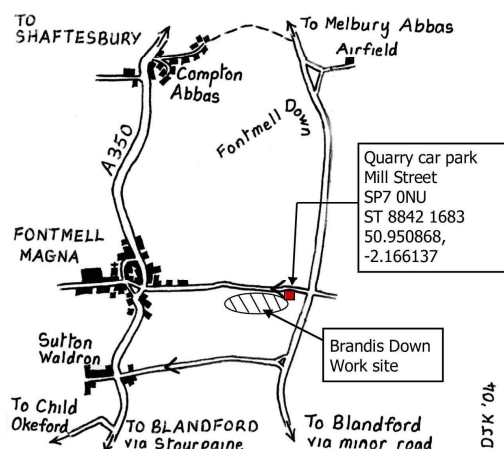
As usual the job is scrub management, probably prickly and tangled - but life would be so boring without a few challenges, surely! The bonfire should warm us up after breaks, and provide those vital hot drinks.

N.B. Park in Quarry car park, entrance has been widened.



Brandis Down Fontmell

OS 183



Sunday 10 Mar: SW Hyde (ARC) Nr Bere Regis

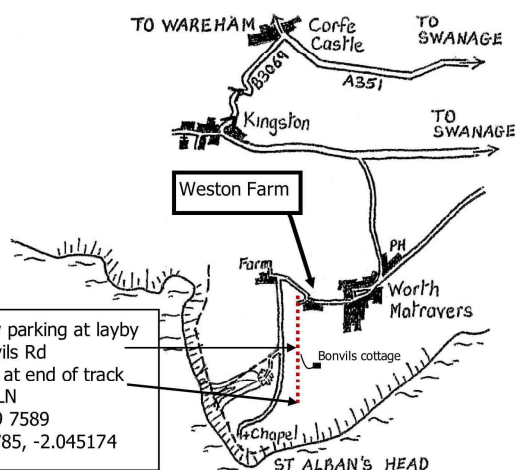
As the birds start to plan for the joys of Spring with nest building on the downlands, we have a final burst of Heathland work on self sown pine. See 8 Oct for map & details.

16 & 17 Mar: Dunyeats (ARC) East Dorset

This may be our last "cut & burn" type task before Summer. Our work on Heathland in Summer is very limited, so make the best of this chance to help this endangered and vital habitat. See 18 Feb for map & details.

Weston Farm

OS 195



23 & 24 Mar: Weston Farm, Worth Matravers (NT) Purbeck

Weather Dependant see website

If the weather is not too wet or cold, we will be continuing with the stone steps down to the Coast Path. As this job is best done in good conditions, check emails and/or the website before the task.

NB: Meet at trailer and work site. Follow right hand track by the turning to Bonvils cottage, through the gates to the where the trailer is parked. Cattle in fields, please make sure all gates are closed.



30 & 31 Mar or 1 Apr: Weston Farm, Worth Matravers (NT) Purbeck

Optional extra day if one of the other days is too wet.

This is Easter weekend, but if the task on 23/24 Mar is cancelled or cut to 1 day, and there is interest in working this weekend, we have the option using 1 or 2 days this weekend to continue with this job. See Emails or website for confirmation.

D C V DIARY November 2023 - March 2024

Date	Task Site	Client	Work
4 & 5 November	Parley Common, East Dorset	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine bashing
11 & 12 Nov	Powerstock Common West Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Scrub cutting
<i>Thurs 16 Nov</i>	<i>Soup Evening with Helen</i>	<i>Gorrman - Book with Helen</i>	<i>**See socials</i>
Sun 19 Nov	Lower Kingcombe W Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Hedge maintenance
25 & 26 Nov	Downhouse Farm Nr Bridport	National Trust	Tree planting/or scrub cutting
2 & 3 December	Parley Common, East Dorset	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine bashing
Sun 10 December	Downhouse Farm Nr Bridport	National Trust	Tree planting/or scrub cutting
16 & 17 Dec	Trigon Nr Bere Regis	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine bashing
<i>Sat 16 December</i>	<i>DCV Christmas Dinner **See Socials</i>	<i>Booking essential . .</i>	<i>Book with Helen G</i>
Sun 31 December	Powerstock Common West Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Scrub cutting
6 & 7 January 2024	Parley Common East Dorset	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine bashing
13 & 14 January	Fontmell Down North Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Path clearance
Sun 21 January	Lankham Bottom	Butterfly Conservation	Scrub control
27 & 28 January	S W Hyde, Nr Bere Regis	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine bashing
3 & 4 February	Rempstone, Purbeck	Rempstone Estate	Gorse cutting
10 & 11 Feb	Powerstock Common West Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Scrub bashing
<i>Tues 13 Feb</i>	<i>Pancake Day at Peter's</i>	<i>Book with Peter</i>	<i>** see socials</i>
Sun 18 February	Dunyeats, Nr Wimborne	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine bashing
24 & 25 February	Lower Kingcombe West Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Hedge maintenance
2 & 3 March	Brandis Down Fontmell North Dorset	Dorset Wildlife Trust	Scrub control
Sun 10 March	S W Hyde, Nr Bere Regis	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine clearance
16 & 17 March	Dunyeats, Nr Wimborne	Amphibian Reptile Conservation	Pine clearance
23 & 24 March	Weston Farm Worth Matravers	National Trust	Step building
30 & 31 March	Weston Farm Worth Matravers	National Trust	Step building