

Holyford Woods Spring 2017 newsletter



Dear Friends

Holyford Woods is a truly delightful and special place. Changing with every season it provides a haven of peace and tranquillity for those who visit. Another winter has drawn to a close it seems, and signs of spring are really beginning to show in the woods with early wildflowers beginning to bloom. As one of East Devon's ten nature reserves, it is of course well known for its magnificent carpet of bluebells. The first indications of blue in the warmer spots of the wood are beginning to be seen.

Throughout the sixteen years since the wood was saved by generous public donations, and with the support of East Devon District Council, a programme of conservation work has sought to protect the ancient character and natural beauty of this special part of East Devon. The EDDC Countryside team assumes the main responsibility for Holyford Woods management, assisted by enthusiastic volunteers, particularly those from the Axe Vale and District Conservation Society. If you'd like to become an East Devon Conservation Volunteer, please contact nrobinson@eastdevon.gov.uk. Details of AV&DCS can be found at www.avdcs.wordpress.com.

Led by James Chubb and Nathan Robinson of the Countryside team, work over the last few months has included further felling of conifer trees to enhance biodiversity, glade clearance and the installation of a couple of rustic seats, and the erection of way markers to highlight the northern permitted path. A new dormouse box scheme has been installed in an area called the Hangings, and at the bottom end of Seaton Down Coppice. Some clearance of vegetation to the sides of the main track through the woods has now been completed, and with a dry weather window some track levelling work will be undertaken to improve access for maintenance vehicles. It is also planned to restore the old causeway below the reservoir footbridge, which again will help vehicular access.

The Woodland Trust has completed some fencing work repairs and tree cutting to the north of the woods where it borders agricultural land. There are also plans to provide a charcoal burning facility within the woods at the western end, and to reconnect the woods as a teaching resource for local schools.

EDDC has commissioned various surveys of both reservoirs. It is very much hoped that the top reservoir (currently privately owned) will be incorporated into the reserve through legal transfer at a near future point.

This year's Bluebell Day has been arranged for Monday 1st May. It will start with a dawn chorus walk, departing from the car park at the top of Seaton Down Hill at 6am, led by Donald Campbell. The main event will then commence at 11am at Holyford, with a free shuttle bus service starting at 10.45am from Colyford Memorial Hall car park. Refreshments will be served all day. There will be information stalls, a plant stall, raffle, plus wild food in the woods. Guided flower and history walks will take place throughout the day, with the last bus leaving at 4.15pm.

I'm delighted to say that the Trust has recently appointed four new trustees, who will be joining us at Bluebell Day. They have excellent practical and conservation skills, all keen to help take the woods forward for the conservation of wildlife and for public enjoyment and participation. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all previous trustees who have given their time, experience and knowledge to assist in the Trust's aims since 2002.

As referenced earlier, in the early days of our woodland story, we were fortunate to be supported by a loyal and enthusiastic group of friends who helped raise considerable funds to secure its future. In 2016 a formal 'Friends' initiative was resurrected.

If you're not a Friend already, we'd like to encourage you to support us financially, with a suggested minimum £5 annual subscription per household. Do please return the accompanying slip by post to the Membership Secretary: Andrew Lamb, The Old Pump House, Holyford Lane, Colyford EX24 6HW. Alternatively bring it along on Bluebell Day.

Mike Eley, Chairman, on behalf of the Holyford Woodland Trust

www.holyfordwoods.org.uk

To the Membership Secretary, Holyford Woodland Trust.

I enclose my donation £..... (cheques payable to Holyford Woodland Trust)

Name

Address

Post code

Telephone

E-mail

Instead of a cheque please do consider completing the following standing order form as this reduces administration considerably. Return the above section to Andrew Lamb (we will not disclose your personal details to anyone else) and send the standing order form to your Bank.

✂.....

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Account Name:

Signatures:

Amount: Amount in words:

Date of first payment: Frequency of payments: **Annual**

Beneficiary Bank: **Lloyds, Trinity Square, Axminster EX13 5AL** Name of Beneficiary: **Holyford Woodland Trust**

Beneficiary Account Number: **01478605** Beneficiary Sort Code: **30-90-37**

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