

COLNE VALLEY PARTNERSHIP NEWSLETTER

June 2007



Have you discovered the Colne Valley Park?

“Discover the Colne Valley Park” is a Heritage Lottery Funded project which aims to raise awareness of the countryside on West London’s doorstep, celebrate its heritage, promote the many places to visit and engage people in fun things to do in the Colne Valley Regional Park. There are 27,500 acres to explore stretching from Rickmansworth to the banks of the River Thames at Staines and an amazingly diverse landscape with over 60 lakes and reservoirs, over 200km of rivers and canal and 13 sites of scientific interest.

The Discover the Colne Valley Park project finishes at the end of June 2007. To date the project has run over 60 events, supported 40 organisations within the regional par and involved over 5,000 people in educational or family activities.



From Top Left:

- *Pooh sticks on the River Colne
- * A walk in Black Park Country Park
- #The Heron at Denham Country Park
- *Children at Lake
- *Park Woods

* Photographs taken by members of the public and entered into the Colney Valley Snapshot competition

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DRAMA IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Last summer saw the Colne Valley host its first ever outdoor theatre production. "Mrs Brunel" with the Mikron Theatre Company was an excellent example of partnership at work with funding, a beautiful venue, BBQ and staff support provided by Packet Boat Marina (British Waterways Marinas Ltd) and additional funding and volunteer support given by the Friends of the Colne Valley Park. Selling tickets to recover costs was always going to be a big task but we rose to the challenge and ensured the biggest audience that Mikron had ever played to (130 people). The event was such a great success that Mikron will be returning this year on Saturday 16th of June with "Colossus Of Roads" It tells the story of Thomas Telford, who was given the nickname Colossus of Roads by poet Robert Southey. It's 250 years since Telford's birth and it will be interesting to see how his profession is viewed today especially in the setting of a regional park, which has 3 major motorways dissecting its landscape.

Call Vicky Tustian on 01895 8398

NEW KID IN THE PARK

The Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre would like to introduce its new Centre Manager, Jason Ingamells, who started in post this winter. Jason comes from Coombe Abbey Country Park, a 450year old historical Estate in Warwickshire. Jason has many years of experience in developing visitor services; including large scale catering facilities, conference administration, retail management, event organisation, and interpretation.

Jason is looking forward to the challenge of developing the Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre to provide you with the quality visitor experience this area deserves.

Come and drop into the Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre, just off junction 1 of the M40, and meet Jason and his team.

LAUNCH OF NEW PATHS AT IVER

Dominic Grieve, MP, was joined by local walkers, riders and cyclists when he officially opened the new paths to the public on Friday, April 27, saying "I am delighted to see the opening of this extension to the Colne Valley Trail. I know that it is the result of a great deal of hard work and co-operation between many organisations including the Colne Valley Park, Three Valleys Water and Bucks Country Council."

"I'm looking forward to the joining together of an important link in the Colne Valley Regional Park which is something I've been campaigning for."

The new bridleway runs from Trout Lane to Thorney Golf Course and forms part of the existing 'Colne Valley Trail', which is a flagship route for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders. As part of the National Cycle Network, it serves both as a recreational trail and 'car-alternative' travel route along off-road tracks and quiet country lanes, linking up towns and villages with places of work, country parks and other countryside and wildlife attractions.



In addition, Iver public footpath No. 16 has been diverted away from Court Lane Industrial Estate to follow a more attractive route adjacent to the Colne Brook. It provides a beautiful walk that links Thorney Country Park with the Slough Arm of the Grand Union Canal, Iver Village and the wider network of footpaths in the Colne Valley Park.

Mr Grieve added "I enjoy walking and must have spent lots of time trespassing in the past to join up 2 paths. Here at last is an authorised and legal path on which people can walk from here to Rickmansworth. It's a great achievement.

MAKING HISTORY COME TO LIFE

Last Autumn saw the Colne Valley Park celebrating its amazing heritage with the Colne Valley Living Heritage Day. Over 700 people attended the event to enjoy falconry displays, join the Roman Legion, learn about flint knapping and thatching, sell their family in a slave auction, make mosaics and pennants and much more. The fantastic day was the result of a successful Local Heritage Initiative bid from the Friends of the Colne Valley Park. It was supported by local history groups who provided information and displays and also saw the opening of a restored Roman well which the Local Heritage Initiative funding also made possible.



The well received a blessing from a Roman priest, a member of the Roman re-enactment team which provided the opportunity for adults and children to try on Roman armour and sword fighting techniques.

EX OFFENDERS TURN OVER A NEW LEAF

'It's a huge change of direction,' said Councillor David Routledge MBE, Mayor of Hillingdon. 'These people left prison with very little chance of finding work, but Blue Sky has given them jobs and the opportunity to gain self-respect and turn their lives around.' The Mayor was visiting a tree-planting project at Denham Quarry, in the Colne Valley Park on Friday, 9th February. Blue Sky's team of ex-offenders were planting trees there as part of a programme of environmental improvements being undertaken in the Colne Valley Park.

The Blue Sky team of ex-offenders is supervised by a mentor who is also an ex-offender. Team-members get a real job with a real company, work-skills and the chance to turn their lives around. Employers get a reliable and skilled workforce in grounds maintenance. Employment, such as that offered by Blue Sky, reduces the likelihood of re-offending by up to 50%.



WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

