

VALLEY CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Holder of the KCC Award for Volunteering Excellence



www.valleyconservation.org.uk

MEMBERS NEWSLETTER No 116 December 2011



Dramatic helicopter rescue in the Loose Valley



Picture: A Garnham

This dramatic picture shows the Kent Air Ambulance stationary in the valley with the paramedics attending to a man, found collapsed and lying in the grass, by an early morning dog walker. This event took place on the 26th November and we understand that the patient has now made a full recovery. He was extremely lucky to have been found and that the weather was unusually mild for the time of year.

Valley Conservation Society Land Purchase

As we close for press the Society is concluding the purchase of two small parcels of land. One is opposite Upper Crisbrook Pond between Crisbrook Mill and The Cow Shed, the other opposite Reeds pond at the lower end of the Valley. Full details will be given at the AGM and in the next newsletter.

Planning News:

There have been several planning applications submitted recently affecting the Valley.

TA/0176/11. Woodland North Side of Bockingford Lane, Tovil.

Proposal: Notification of proposed works to trees in a Conservation Area; To fell 1 no Sycamore and fell or coppice 18 no Ash trees within the loose Valley Conservation Area.

This application has now been withdrawn and re-submitted with a reduced coppicing requirement.

MA/11/1471. Teasaucer Stables, Bockingford Lane, Tovil.

Proposal: Retrospective application for the construction of an approximately 55 metre long and 2.5 metre wide solid hard surface trackway with proposed asphalt surface coloured green.

This application has been refused, reasons stated. The proposed development, if permitted would result in harm to the character and appearance of the countryside and rural landscape, resulting in significant and demonstrable harm to visual amenity.

MA/11/2010. Crisbrook House, Cave Hill, Tovil.

Applicant: Valley Conservation Society.

Proposal: Change of use of land for the stationing of a wooden clad container for the storage of equipment and tools in association with the maintenance of ponds and land in the Lower Loose Valley.

MA/06/0288. The Forge, 3-5 Farleigh Hill, Tovil

Proposal: An application for new planning permission to replace extant planning consent.

Demolition of existing industrial building and ancillary office and construction of a residential development comprising 10 flats and external car park.

MA/11/2168. Land west of Burial Ground Lane, Tovil.

Proposal: Erection of 29 dwellings including the raising of the land levels within the site.

Construction of new access from Farleigh Hill together with the construction of new internal access roads, the provision of parking spaces and car barns and associated landscaping and footpath links.

MA/11/1872. Rhencullen, Bridge Street Loose

Proposal: Retrospective application for hard-landscaping works to rear garden.

This application has been Withdrawn/ Called In/ Turned Away.

Household Waste Review. The KCC are currently (until February) conducting a review of the Counties Household Waste Recycling Centre Service. The current local service and its impact on Tovil is quite important and your views can be expressed through this survey. The survey details can be collected from the Gateway or can be filled in online at www.kent.gov.uk

A second successful event with The Kingfisher Singers

On the evening of 17th December a second successful evening of song took place at the Boughton Monchelsea Village Hall organised by Committee Member Alan Smith. More than seventy people attended the evening, enjoying Fish and Chips and a Snack Bar. The evenings Raffle organized by the Kingfisher Singers raised £150 for their chosen charity Medway Young Carers. Special thanks go to Maggie Davis for providing the Snack Bar, Paul Amner for providing publicity leaflets and of course Alan Smith, Dennis Usmar and Bryn Cornwell for organising such a successful event.

Woodbridge Drive Tree Clearance



Photo: D Usmar



Photo: D Usmar

These pictures were taken during the recent tree felling, behind the play area in Woodbridge Drive. A rope was tied around the trunk of the trees during cutting and then a crane was utilised to lift the trees into the air before being lowered gently to the ground. This prevented any further damage to the rock face. The work has been carried out by Maidstone Borough Council.

Apology : The Standing Order Mandate issued with the October Newsletter carried the wrong Bank Account Number for the Society. The correct account number should be **02166853** and appears on the corrected form at the back of this issue.

This is a copy of the letter sent by DEFRA in response to an application for grant funding submitted by Dennis Usmar on behalf of the Society. We will be continuing to apply for funding in the New Year to assist us in our mission to conserve our beautiful valley and its surrounds.

Dear Dennis

Re: Local Nature Partnership capacity building fund application – South Maidstone

Thank you for your interest in Local Nature Partnerships and your application to the LNP capacity building fund. Unfortunately your application for funding was unsuccessful.

We realise that this will be a disappointment for you, but would strongly encourage you to engage with the other LNP capacity-building activity that is being undertaken locally by Kent County Council to discuss how you might work together.

Competition for funding was strong. We received 37 applications in total requesting more than the total funds available. Each application was assessed against the published fund criteria and objectives and we were only able to make offers to the strongest applications.

Unfortunately we are unable to provide individually tailored written feedback, but the following profile of successful applications may help you understand why your application was rejected. Those which were considered to be particularly strong:

- Had outcomes that were clearly aligned to the objectives of the fund: focused on building or expanding a partnership that would be able to work at a strategic and landscape scale to improve the range of benefits and services we get from a healthy natural environment.
- Considered the whole of the natural environment in an area and showed how they would engage a broad range of partners in their work such as local authorities, businesses, statutory authorities, civil society organisations, land managers, local record centres, local enterprise partnerships and people from communities themselves
- Had detailed, costed and appropriate milestones which clearly showed how the outcomes would be delivered.
- Had considered how to tackle cross-boundary working with neighbouring or overlapping potential LNPs
- Had credible plans for becoming self-sustaining

Please note that applications for the fund are not the same as applying for formal LNP status. Applications to become LNPs will be open to everyone next spring and participation in the LNP capacity building fund is neither a pre-requisite for nor a future guarantee of becoming formally recognised as an LNP.

If you would like to seek further feedback on your application or if you have any questions about this letter then please contact us at LNPs@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Mary Jeavans

Natural Environment Strategic Unit, Defra.

Email: LNPs@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/natural/whitepaper/local-nature-partnerships/lnp-fund/>

Dates for the meetings of the Executive Committee

Wednesdays:

4 th January	2 nd May	5 th September
1 st February	6 th June	3 rd October
7 th March	4 th July	7 th November
4 th April	1 st August	5 th December

AGM: 18th February 2012

The Annual General Meeting of the Valley Conservation Society will be held at Eling Court on Saturday 18th February starting at 10.30. Eling Court is off Hilden Shaw on the BroadOak Estate. There is disabled access.

If you would like to nominate someone for the posts of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer or Secretary or simply contribute by sitting on the Executive Committee please let me know in writing (or email) by Saturday 11th February 2012. Please check first to confirm the person you are nominating is prepared to stand. You may also nominate yourself. If there are any items you would like included on the Agenda for the meeting please also let me have these by 11/2/2012. In order to vote at the AGM you will need to have renewed your Membership for 2012. This can be done at the door if you are unable to sooner.

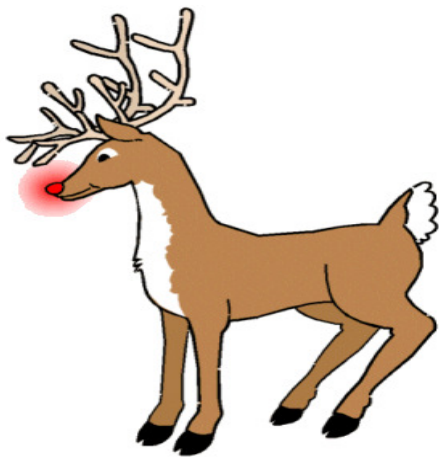
This has been a another very busy year for the Society and the Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support and wish you a belated Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to your continued support in 2012 and hope to see you all at the AGM.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Fleck
Secretary

Valley Conservation Newsletter
Compiled and Printed: David Fleck
Secretary.

P.S..The black and white box on the Newsletter Banner is a QR code. Those members with smart phones can link directly to the society's website using this code.



Invasive Species No 10: Rudolf

There are six species of deer in the UK. Red and Roe deer are the only native species. Fallow deer (*Dama dama*) are a long-standing naturalised species and sika deer (*Cervus nippon*), muntjac deer (*Muntiacus reevesi*) and Chinese Water deer (*Hydropotes inermis*) were introduced in the last 150 years.

It is thought that deer are more abundant and widespread now than at any time in the past 1000 years. There is also evidence of increasing deer numbers in the expansion of their geographic range. Rapid increase in deer numbers in recent decades is a result of:

- Increased woodland cover
- Milder winters leading to increased fecundity
- Changes to agriculture such as increased area of winter crops
- Escape from parks and farms
- Greater connectivity between green space in urban areas

Deer are culled (approximately 350,000 per year) to manage the populations and to try to prevent the problems which can be caused by deer.

In the countryside, excessive deer densities cause over-grazing and excessive browsing and trampling. In ancient woodland this can lead to:

- Loss of characteristic woodland plant species such as the oxlip and bluebell
- Declines in characteristic woodland bird species such as the nightingale due to loss of plant structural diversity and food supply
- Declines in invertebrate abundance and diversity
- Prevention of adequate tree regeneration and traditional coppicing management

Other serious problems include disease transmission to humans and livestock, animal welfare in dense populations, poaching and human safety.

Increasing numbers of deer in urban areas has led to several emergent problems including:

- Road traffic accidents,
- Damage to gardens, allotments and parks,
- Attacks on pets by Muntjac deer and vice versa
- Deer trapped in railings, canals and waterways requiring emergency service assistance
- Violent attacks on deer by humans
- Illegal deer coursing and poaching

A nation-wide survey from 2000–2005 collected reports of over 30,500 deer-vehicle collisions (DVC), of which 1,150 resulted in human injury and 20 in human fatality. The survey emphasises that DVC are significantly under-reported. In 2006 over 3,500 live deer casualties were reported.

VALLEY CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Membership Application 2012 and/or Donation Form



**Doing nothing
is not an option**

I/We should like to join/renew our membership with the Society

Membership: £2 each per year (50p aged 14 to 18) payable by cheque, cash or standing order (form below)

Name: (1) (2)

(3) (4)

Address: Postcode

Phone Mobile Email

I enclose cheque/cash for £

OR I have completed the Standing Order Mandate (donations welcome)

Signature(s)

To help save costs, I am/we are happy to receive newsletters by email (please tick)

Please send completed form/standing order mandate and cheque/cash (if appropriate) to:

**Colin Holman, Membership Secretary,
Flat 3, The Manor, Hayle Place, Cripple Street, Maidstone, ME15 6DW**

Office use only:

<i>S/O</i>	<i>Issued</i>	<i>Donation</i>	<i>Membership Nos</i>
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STANDING ORDER MANDATE

To the Manager

Your bank or building society name here:

Their address here:

Please pay Lloyds TSB, 422 Loose Road, Maidstone, ME15 8PA

For the credit of Valley Conservation Society

Sort Code 30-95-37

Account Number 02166853

The sum of £

Commencing on the first day of January 20..... and every year thereafter on the same date until further notice, and debit my account accordingly.

Your account name: VCS Ref No:

Your bank's sort code: Your account number

Signature: Date: