



# Headbourne Worthy Village News

Autumn 2011

News and Information from your local Parish Council



## Worthys Festival 2011

September's Worthys Festival saw a fantastic array of different activities and events for us all to enjoy, including the lovely Country Church at Harvest flower festival at St Swithun's Church. Over £150 was raised in donations for the church. The Festival as a whole was a great success, uniting the whole community.

A special celebration party and AGM is being held on Wednesday 9th November at the Sports & Social Club off Lovedon Lane at 7.30pm. We will decide whether to hold another Festival in 2013, and lots of new helpers will be an essential requirement! Anybody interested in getting involved, or who has a comment on this year's Festival, is very welcome. There will be free refreshments and a review of this year's events. *Jane Rutter*

## Meet Ratty at St Swithun's

### Can you help?

The churchyard at St Swithun's is unquestionably one of the finest and most important examples of 'nature in churchyards' in our area. It offers us all an opportunity to study and better understand our relationship with our local wildlife. We must endeavour to protect and preserve this unique local natural environment,

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**To contact your Parish Council: Visit [www.theworthys.org.uk](http://www.theworthys.org.uk)**

or call the Parish Clerk, Hilary Graham, on 883797. [clerk.headbourneworthy@parish.hants.gov.uk](mailto:clerk.headbourneworthy@parish.hants.gov.uk)

# Habitat Conservation at St Swithun's Churchyard



not just for the present but for the benefit of future generations too.

In case you didn't already know, St Swithun's church actually sits on an island. The streams that surround it are rich in chalk-stream fauna and flora. The graveyard beyond the church offers an equally fantastic 'grassy' habitat, and the many trees, bushes and wildflowers further increase this diverse ecosystem. Here are some of the species that can be found:

Otter and water vole;

Dragonflies – such as, southern hawker, blue emperor, common darter;

Butterflies – such as, red admiral, speckled wood, comma;

Moths – tiger, yellow underwing, brimstone;

Stag Beetle;

Birds – grey heron, little egret, great spotted woodpecker, tree creeper;

Reptiles and amphibians – slow worm, frogs, toads; and

Bats – common pipistrelle and Natterer's.

But these habitats are becoming increasingly fragile, being highly sensitive to invasion by dominant and/or non-native species, and also to decay. If neglected, the very 'life' of the churchyard will be threatened.

So what should we do about this? Well, actually

we can do a great deal – not just to help protect the existing wildlife, but also to improve the habitats to bring in new species.

Several years ago, a major habitat improvement project was undertaken by Hampshire Wildlife Trust (HWT). This included the embedding of three otter holts, improvements to the river banks for water voles, narrowing the streams using faggots to ensure adequate water flow and prevention of silting, and some clearance of small trees and scrub to enable more light at ground level for wildflowers.

In more recent years, Worthys Conservation Volunteers has also undertaken some smaller-scale improvements, most notably to benefit wildflowers, both on and close to the river banks.

We now want to renew this conservation work, and with consultation with HWT start a programme of improvements and also educational studies. But we very much need some extra hands, not just to help with the more physical tasks but some of the lighter chores too. Initially, the plan is to carry out improvements over the next twelve months, and then to pull back on the heavy tasks and implement a regime of ongoing management for future years.

We would welcome your help, or maybe you would just like to be kept informed. Please email [enquires@worthysconservationvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:enquires@worthysconservationvolunteers.org.uk)

or phone/text Bruce on 07919 111221, or you can visit our website at

[www.worthysconservationvolunteers.org.uk](http://www.worthysconservationvolunteers.org.uk).

As the proverb says 'many hands make light work!' So please come and join us and help this 'worthy' cause for local nature. The next working party at St Swithuns will be on Sunday 20th November, 1.30pm.

*Bruce Graham, WCV Coordinator*

## Parish Councillor Vacancy

Are you interested in local issues and keen to make a difference?

If so, your Parish Council needs you, as there is a vacancy for a Councillor.

If you're interested, but not sure and want to know more, come to our next Parish Meeting at 7.15p.m. on Monday 14th November at the Church Rooms behind St. Mary's Church in Kings Worthy or contact Hilary Graham on 883797.

### Goodbye and Thank You to Steve:

The Parish Councillors would like to express their thanks to Steve Cramoysan who has had to stand down from the council due to pressure of work. He has made an enormous contribution to the work of your council in the relatively short while he has been a member, and we are all very grateful.

## Neighbourhood Watch

As the nights are drawing in and the clocks are put back and it becomes dark before many people return home from work it is easy for the "light-fingered" to spot houses which are unoccupied. Don't make it easy for them - don't leave all the curtains wide open and do have a light or two on - timers which switch on a light at dusk are quite cheap and readily available. Also keep the garage, sheds and outhouses locked and padlocked - often the source of rich pickings. You don't have to become paranoid, but basic precautions are worth taking.

*David Pearcey, HWPC Chairman*

# Jackie Porter's County Corner

## Disabled Badge Proposals consultation: do you have one? How does it work for you?



With an eye on reducing the fraudulent use of blue badges, the Government is proposing a change to the way Blue Badges are issued: those who have a disability will have to apply to a national office, pay £10, (currently £2) and be subject to an independent assessment of their disability.

The consultation at [www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk) closes on 2nd December. Please ask your friends and neighbours to comment if you aren't able to reply online, or contact me to request a paper copy.

Jackie is keen to know your views too. She says: " Personally, I think this change increases the bureaucracy for disabled people and is a complete waste of money: the emphasis of the review should be on stopping non-genuine blue badge users taking up disabled spaces. The local system we have operating at the moment, makes it easier to appeal if things go wrong." Jackie adds: " Locally most badge holders seem genuine and most people who get the badges use them wisely: the government is targeting the wrong people. Your experience may be very different. Please let me know what you think"

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# South Downs National Park

On April 1st, the South Downs became a National Park. Quite why the Government decided to bring it into being some 60 years after it was first mooted is a mystery. There are those both for and 'agin' it but we have it and it does provide an opportunity to protect the Park's special qualities.

The Park stretches from Winchester to Eastbourne and includes the chalk Downlands and the Western Weald. Kipling described it's shape as "blunt, bow-headed, whale-backed ". hardly a flattering description but does evoke the drama of the area, if not the beauty. It was formed 60 million years ago from a thick band of chalk, when a shallow sea covered much of northern Europe. The resultant landscape forming the ridges, sharp slopes and dramatic valleys we have today.

The Park attracts 40 million visitors a year to enjoy the ancient pastures and woodlands of eastern Hampshire, the Sussex Weald through Devils Dyke to the Seven Sisters cliffs and Beachy Head. Running through the Park is the South Downs Way, thought to date back 6000 years, and a further 3000 km of public

rights of way.

So what will change - some hope not a lot. The main challenge will be to match the needs of farmers with walkers and other visitors which are sometimes contradictory. We also need to find ways of revitalising the Park economy and to encourage young people to buy into the Park's ethos.

Change will hopefully be evolutionary, with widespread consultation with all interested parties and some sort of consensus achieved before such change takes place. The fact that all planning decisions will be made by the Park Authority will help to provide a coordinated approach. Hopefully this will also protect the Park from over-zealous developers.

Please let me have any comments as this is something we want to take forward together. *Cllr Keith Wood*

## 101 is non-emergency alternative to 999

Five years after its introduction in five pilot areas, including Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, 101 is now a permanent alternative to 999 for reporting crime, getting police advice, and contacting local officers. *Cllr Brian Collin*

