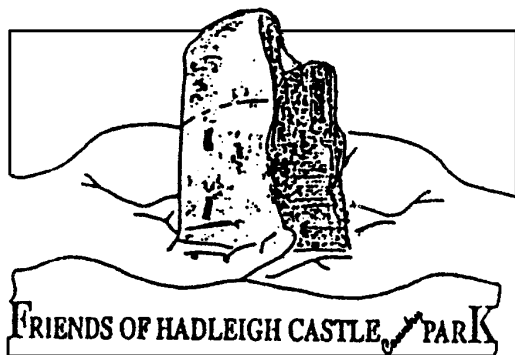


PARK NEWS

Registered Charity No 1029479



NEWSLETTER NO. 77

October 2011

Chairman's Letter

After the fantastic weather early this year, I suppose it is not surprising that we are now enjoying a wonderfully fruitful autumn. Perhaps we should take careful note of the old saw which says something along the lines of 'Mother Nature preparing for a bad winter'. In my experience there is usually more than a grain of truth in this sort of amateur weather lore but only time will tell.

The Olympic rehearsal went off well by all accounts. There are a few minor adjustments to be made to the course itself, though whether these are to make it easier or harder I'm not sure. The placing and removal of signage appeared to be pretty slick and very informative. The proof of the pudding will inevitably be in the eating and next year we will host four times the audience of this year's practice on each of the two consecutive days of competition, 11th & 12th August 2012. The most recent issue of 'Hadleigh Farm' newsletter (September 2011) has an extensive feedback questionnaire which can also be found on www.essexlegacy.org. Follow-up public meetings will probably be announced later in the year. Meanwhile Hadleigh Regeneration shop is still open and looking for comments on traffic management and a facelift for the whole central area. To achieve the maximum benefit for the whole of Hadleigh, these possibilities should be interdependent. Greater publicity of the opportunities offered by the 'Park' for leisure and sporting activities will also be a part of this scheme. Maybe more people than currently use the Park will start to enjoy this marvellous local facility; at least, let's hope so.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Annual General Meeting on 21st October.

Subscriptions

There are still quite a few members who have so far omitted to pay up – I know it is a bit of a chore but nothing is free of charge, even if you receive your 'Park News' by e-mail. Please send cheques to me – or pay in cash at the A.G.M.

Rosemary Carrington

Hadleigh's Olympic Preview

Unable to get tickets for next years Mountain Bike race we were lucky to get a chance to see top riders from 40 countries try out the course in preparation for next year. Saw many friends there so guess many were local people taking the rare opportunity to see what Hadleigh is offering.

Living off Chapel Lane we cut through the country lane to the public entrance at the Salvation Army farm. Pleased to say the lane is left untouched, there was a worry it would be upgraded. It was a perfect summer's morning as we met the cheerful crowds walking in from Castle Lane As one walked onto the site you were suddenly facing the whole vista of the track snaking over the country-side.

A man I was talking to was quite amazed. Apparently they had lived in Hadleigh for 30 years & had never visited the County Park. Two years ago I wrote about sharing the site with a few cows now I shared it with thousands.

The course which the public wandered around stretched over five kilometres winding its way up & down steep slopes. The ladies did five circuits taking around 100 minutes. With the sun beating down it must have been exhausting.

Continued

Friends of Hadleigh Castle Country Park

Chairman

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The Brits came nowhere so the crowd at the final tape screamed their support for the Canadian who just beat the lady from the USA. Our friend Paddy a 60 year old was jumping up & down with excitement like a 10 year old.

After our picnic lunch we walked the track, at the highest point the views of our park, the castle & the Thames were magnificent. When I told the volunteer steward there from Billericay we were local he remarked what a lovely place to live. The largest crowd gathered around the "Leap of Faith" where the cyclists dropped down 20 feet at 45 degrees to then turn sharply left, we had to drag our crouching friend Paddy's head back through the rope fence. We were back at the finish of the men's race to cheer the Frenchman who was some 30 seconds in advance of the next two riders. He has been Olympic champion twice so he will take some beating next year.

As the public left the volunteers bid everyone goodnight. I have to say they all did a great job. It was such an enjoyable summer's day out; let's pray that the weather is as kind next August. *Barry Wootten*

Ranger Report September 2011

Autumn is upon us, with a chill in the morning air, darker evenings and masses of juicy blackberries. It has been several weeks now since the first blackberry-pickers appeared on the scene but there are still plenty of berries for the taking.

The Hadleigh Farm International mountain bike event at the end of July was a big success with 5000 visitors, predominantly from Essex, watching the races. Based on feedback from the riders, adjustments will be made to the course this winter, to incorporate some wider sections for overtaking, steeper uphill climbs and an additional rock feature.

Our summer events ran successfully, with older children enjoying a Sheerluck Holmes detective trail and our popular shelter-building and fire lighting day, 'Survival for Softies'. For the smaller children, there was a Teddy Bear trail, with a succession of scenes to find.

We have recently welcomed two new regular volunteers, John and Les, who will be helping with practical tasks in the Park. Current work includes cutting back low branches all along the main horse ride, preparing the Park for winter by putting additional surfacing material down on potentially muddy access points, and spreading 'green hay' from our flower-rich meadows onto newly-cleared scrub areas, to introduce wildflower seed and so create new meadow.

The cattle will soon be leaving the marshes for the winter, but our top fields will be welcoming traditional-breed Redpoll cattle for a few weeks, to manage the scrub growth and help maintain an open grassland habitat.

With Hallowe'en approaching, watch out for vampire bats if you visit the Park! Also on the calendar are our autumn astronomy evenings, so let's cross our fingers for clear skies! *Ansgar Aldridge, Ranger*

Events

South East Essex Organic Gardeners - Apple Weekend

Sat Oct 15th 10am – 2pm: St. Laurence Orchard, Eastwoodbury Lane, Southend SS2 6RH. Apple display, tasting and buying, BBQ. Pruning demo - Apple stories - Wildlife trail - Scavenger hunt. (Parking at new car park for St. Laurence Park on new road going west from Eastwoodbury Lane, left at roundabout).

Sat Oct 15th 5pm – 9pm: St. Mark's Centre, Princes Street, Southend, SS1 1QA. Educational film - Locally grown vegetable soup - Apple quiz, discussion - Bring and share apple deserts and recipes. Buy tickets in advance.

Sun Oct 16th 10am – 12noon: Allotments, Manchester Drive, Leigh, SS9 3EZ. Orchard and WEN allotment.

Sun Oct 16th 2pm – 5pm: Growing Together Community Gardens, 47 Fairfax Drive, Southend-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase)

Apple pressing - Apple related food - Apple bobbing - Toffee apples - Cider making - Apple tasting and buying - Crafts and cards - Apple stories. Tea and coffee - Apple display - Scavenger hunt - Face painting

For information call 01702 213134
www.seeog.org.uk or www.trustlinks.org

South East Essex Conservation Volunteers

Join in practical conservation projects
Tel: 01268 780585 (Alan) or 01702 258492 (Julian)
Email: SEECV@abpayne.plus.com
Website: www.seecv.org.uk
All tasks **start at 10am** at the designated meeting place.

Sun Oct 9th - St. Mary's Nature Reserve, Meet in the car park of St. Mary's church, North Shoebury Road, North Shoebury. General maintenance required. The wildflower meadow will need its annual cut too. N.B. This may be a morning only project.

Sun Oct 23rd - Butts Hill Pond, Canewdon (Essex Wildlife Trust) Meet on site. Entrance to site is in Butts Paddock, Canewdon. Project involves clearing reedmace and sedge from the pond edge. Please bring waders, if you have them!

Sun Nov 20th - Dodd's Grove (adjoining Belfairs Nature Reserve) Meet at the end of Poors Lane South, Hadleigh. Project in conjunction with the SENHS. Ground clearance will be carried out to encourage biodiversity.

Sun Dec 4th - Hadleigh Castle Country Park
Meet by the Rangers' Office in the car park, at the far end of Chapel Lane, Hadleigh. Task unconfirmed.

Events

Hadleigh Country Park Events

Events start from **Chapel Lane Car Park** unless otherwise stated.

Car parking charge £2.00

**** For pre-booking** or information please phone 01702 551072 **#nnb** = no need to book or e-mail hadleigh.cp@essexcc.gov.uk

we recommend you check details before making a long journey

Sat Oct 8th - Astronomy Open Night

What does a galaxy look like? Could you tell the difference between Jupiter and Saturn? Find out more about these and other heavenly bodies at our stargazing event. Telescopes and expert knowledge provided by Southend Planetarium and Castle Point Astronomy Club. Clear skies permitting.

Cost: Free. Hot drinks for sale. 7.30pm – 9.30pm. #nnb

Sun Oct 9th - Iron Age Roundhouse Open Afternoon

Come and meet the Chieftain's family round the fire to learn how your ancestors lived 2000 years ago, and see how cloth is dyed using wild plants grown in the Roundhouse garden. Cost: free. Any time 1– 4 pm

Sat Oct 15th - Guided Tour of the Olympic Mountain Bike Course.

A chance to get up close to Hadleigh's challenging Olympic cycle course and have all your questions answered. ****BOOKING ESSENTIAL** as places are limited: phone 0845 603 7624 Cost: Free. 2 pm.

Weds Oct 26th - Hallowe'en Arts & Crafts

Enter the Roundhouse of Horrors and find lots of creepy crafts to get your fangs into! Make a scary mask, create your own potion recipe, make a cat, bat or spider and find your own true wand to cast spells with.

Cost: £4 per child. Suitable for age 6+ Start any time 1– 4 pm. Come in Hallowe'en costume! #nnb

Tues Oct 30th - Bat Hunt

Wanted: hunters for our missing bats! Follow their trail from the spooky house into the park and see how many you can spot, to win yourself a prize. Come in Hallowe'en costume! Suitable for ages 3 to 8 years. Cost: £4 per child, including prize. Any time 12.30 – 3.30 pm. #nnb

Sun Nov 6th - Iron Age Roundhouse Open Afternoon

Come and see candles being made from beeswax in the traditional way, and meet the Chieftain's family round the fire to learn how your ancestors lived 2000 years ago.

Cost: free. Any time 1– 3 pm

Sat Nov 19th - Guided Tour of the Olympic Mountain Bike Course.

Meet **1.30 pm**. Other details as Oct 15th

Sat Dec 3rd - Astronomy Open Night

Time: **5 – 7 pm**. Other details are the same as Oct 8th

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Sat 8th – Sun 9th Oct Hadleigh Old Fire Station, Open Weekend

and exhibition, High Street, Hadleigh SS7 2PA.

11.00 -17:00

Plus launch of Hadleigh Art Trail (8th – 15th. For details phone 1702 318171)

RSPB events

Call 01268 559158 for information on following

Healthy Living Walks on Mondays 12.30 – 1pm and

Wildlife Walks on Thursdays 10.30am – 12.30pm Both free, no need to book - Wat Tyler Country Park.

Tues 4th – Sat 22nd Oct - Brent Goose Watch

Leigh-on-Sea 10am – 4pm daily (weather permitting). Come to experience the sight and sound of the Brent geese which have flown thousands of miles from Siberia! Location: Victoria Wharf, Old Leigh (just behind the car park). Free event.

Weds Oct 12th - Little Owls Club.

10am – 12noon. Outside fun and activities aimed at the under 5's and join in with the Weapons of Sound workshop.

Cost: £2 per child, no need to book. RSPB Discovery Zone, Wat Tyler Country Park, SS16 4UH.

South East Essex RSPB Group Field Meetings

Sun Oct 16th - RSPB Wallasea Island.

Follow road past the entrance to the Marina straight through the farm for approx half a mile. Limited parking, PLEASE CAR SHARE IF POSSIBLE. Meet at 08:00.

Sun Nov 20th - Coach trip - RSPB Rainham Marshes.

Visitor Centre, Hides, Toilets, Café, Shop. N.B. Coach leaves Victoria Avenue at 09:00 (White Horse 08:50). Cost £12.00.

Sun Nov 27th - Wakering Stairs.

Take the Foulness Road from Great Wakering church and the 2nd exit from the mini roundabout within the MOD fencing. Follow this road to the seawall. Meet at 09:00.

Sun Nov 18th - Stambridge, Barton Hall Creek and Beyond.

Meet at 09:00 in the lay-by opposite the Trout Fishery at Great Stambridge.

Sun Jan 8th - Southend Pier

Meet at the lower level entrance at 10:00. All welcome.

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8th – 30th October

Various Lady Essex Seal and Wildlife Trips from Wallasea and Burnham 01702 258666

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Essex Wildlife Trust Castle Point Group

Training Suite, Little Haven Children's Hospice, Daws Heath Road. Doors open at 7.30 for 8pm start. For information phone Keith Upfold 01268 754949

Mon Oct 10th - Recycling and the Introduction of a new Food Waste Scheme

A talk by Tim Read, Castle Point Borough Council

Mon Nov 14th - New Dormouse Monitoring Scheme in Essex

A talk by Rebecca Banks, Biodiversity Project Officer (Essex Wildlife Trust).

Friends of Hadleigh Country Park

Annual General Meeting

Followed by

John Skinner of Southend Museum

giving an

Illustrated talk

on

Toadstools & Mushrooms

on

Friday 21st October 2011

7.30pm for 8pm

Hadleigh Methodist Church
Chapel Lane. Hadleigh.

Raffle & Refreshments

Members free, visitors £1, Extra Parking Available Courtesy of

Registered Charity No. 1029479

Morrisons Supermarket

