

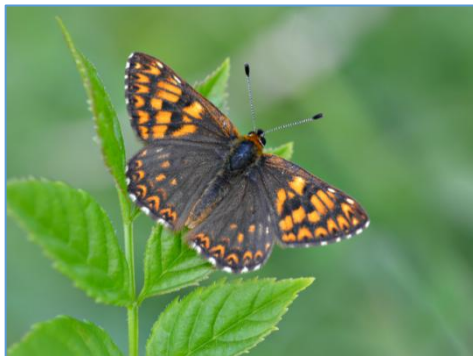


FOLKtalk

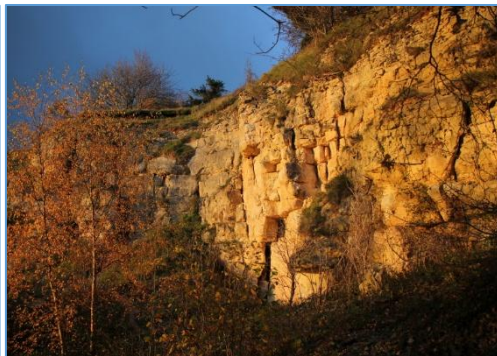
Issue 81
Spring
2026

**Friends of Leckhampton Hill
& Charlton Kings Common**

Conserving and improving the Hill for you



Duke of Burgundy butterfly



Exposed geology in Salterley Quarry

NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE STATUS CONFIRMED

Natural England has confirmed that our site is to be conferred the designation as a **National Nature Reserve (NNR)** this year. The designation recognises the special value of this site for both its nature and its geology.

As the site remains a precious area of unimproved limestone grassland, it is home to a wide diversity of nature, including nationally endangered species like the Adder and the Duke of Burgundy butterfly for which this type of landscape is especially favourable.

At the same time, the geology of this limestone escarpment has been deemed important, not least because the old quarry faces leave exposed millions of years of geological history.

[For more news about the NNR see the Secretary's column on page 3 and The Word from Wayne on page 4.](#)

Inside this issue

The Word from Wayne	4	2025 Butterfly Survey Report	13
2025 AGM Report	9	FOLK Work Party Report	16

ASH DIEBACK – SOME HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Ash trees have been part of Britain’s landscape for centuries and their timber has been central to the production of everything from tool handles to long-lasting furniture. Sadly, though, ash dieback has been around in the UK for at least a decade and has obviously had a devastating effect on many ash trees. Some early predictions suggested a widespread and very high death rate among our native ash trees, similar to the scale of havoc wreaked earlier by Dutch Elm disease.

Although it has indeed proved very damaging, necessitating the felling or trimming of diseased trees, more recent research¹ seems to show that some young ash tree populations are evolving resistance to ash dieback. This is likely to be linked to the fact that ash trees are wind pollinated, meaning that seeds have two different parents, which, in turn, creates a natural genetic diversity within local populations.

In this way, keeping some trees which are affected (but not so badly that they present a risk to either the tree itself or people and traffic) has allowed “survivor trees” to cross pollinate and produce offspring which have greater resistance to the disease.

While enhanced resistance is not the same as complete immunity, this research does at the very least, provide a realistic hope that this ancient species may continue to thrive in our home landscape.

¹ This article refers to research conducted by RBG Kew and Queen Mary University of London.

Correction In the report on butterflies which featured in the 25th Anniversary edition of FOLKtalk (published September 2025) where there should have been a photograph of the Chalk Hill Blue, an editorial error meant that an image of the Common Blue was inserted instead.

This year of 2026 brings change to FOLK. After giving five years of outstanding service as chair of the Executive Committee, Mike Donnelly stepped down at the FOLK AGM. As yet, FOLK has not appointed a new chair.

At its first meeting after the AGM the committee agreed a rota to chair the FOLK executive meetings, and this will give committee members an opportunity to experience chairing the meetings and the other responsibilities that go with the post. We are also interested in encouraging any FOLK member who might have chairing skills to consider taking up our invitation to attend a FOLK meeting to gain an understanding of what's involved. Please contact me if you would like further details.

FOLK is pleased to welcome two new Executive Committee members: Ruth Cook, a work party volunteer, and Julian Jones, a work party coordinator. We still have vacancies on the committee and if you feel that work party volunteering is not for you, perhaps an administrative role might suit you. Again, please contact me if you are interested.

We look forward to another busy and successful year. The work parties are still very popular and are also supported by the Cotswold Wardens, Gloucester Vale Conservation Volunteers and, increasingly, by local companies' volunteer days.

I would like to draw your attention to a highlight planned for 2026. **Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Common is to be officially designated as a National Nature Reserve (NNR).** This is one of the King's series of NNRs. It is a great credit to The Hill and Common that this award has been confirmed as it will be one of only just over two hundred such sites across the country. There will be a ceremony to mark the event in the summer. The title of this NNR is to be Cheltenham Escarpment NNR.

Rachel Watson, FOLK Secretary

leckhamptonhill@gmail.com

THE WORD FROM WAYNE

Wayne Sedgwick, Senior Ranger, Cheltenham Borough Council

Grazing

The Galloway herd is still on its winter pastures and they are enjoying a good supply of fresh grass, which has already started growing because of the unusually mild and wet winter weather. Part of the herd is still back on the grazier's land at Wade's Farm near Stroud, but we currently have around thirteen head of cattle which are over-wintering on our site. Of these, almost half are cows in calf, while the rest are a mixture of young steers and young heifers which have been born here over the last year or so. The pregnant cows will move to the Reversion Field for calving during April.

Regular readers will know that **the success of the grazing regime is dependent on our dedicated team of Cattle Spotters** who take it in turn to check on the safety and welfare of the herd during each week. Although we have recruited a full team, and they are doing a great job, they do need a bit of help.

So we would like to recruit some more volunteers. This could help to spread the workload and provide some back-up for occasions when a day needs to be covered. Maybe you could offer some time once a week, or perhaps just once a fortnight? Eddie the grazier trains all new recruits on what to look for, and there is a WhatsApp group for spotters to report any concerns they have when they are with the herd.

If you would like to volunteer - or just find out more about the role - please email me at wayne.sedgwick@cheltenham.gov.uk.

NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE STATUS

There has been significant progress in Cheltenham Borough Council's application for a core area of our site to become a National Nature Reserve. Conferring that status has already been agreed by Natural England and it will be officially known as **Cheltenham Escarpment NNR**. This will apply to the approximately 150 acres of the site which are already recognised as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

NNRs were established to protect some of the country's most important habitats, species and geology, and to provide 'outdoor laboratories' for research. Most NNRs offer great opportunities to schools, specialist interest groups and the

public to experience wildlife at first hand and to learn more about nature conservation.

Rebuilding the Cotswold Stone Wall

FOLK has continued to support the splendid work of the Cotswold Wardens in rebuilding a huge length of stone wall running between Hartley Lane and the Hillfort. Over the past few years, the purchase of stone has been funded through the National Grid grant as part of a wide-ranging three-year project which has now ended. We are delighted to report that the Cotswold Wardens have purchased the latest load of stone. As has happened throughout the rebuilding, stone has been carefully sourced from a quarry where the stone is the same as is found on our site. Work continues; the newly restored wall already measures more than 400m and is approaching the entrance to the wider site of the hillfort.

Ash Dieback

Although this aggressive disease has undoubtedly wreaked havoc in some areas of The Commons, there is some hope that the worst may be over and that measures taken may have helped reduce any further spread.

In recent years around two hundred diseased trees have had to be felled where their close proximity to footpaths would pose an obvious risk of injury if either a tree or large branches were to fall. The Borough Council tree officer has also approved innovative approaches to the management of ash dieback. These include undertaking selective crown reduction (taking out about 2m of top growth where the disease is seen) in the hope that the tree will recover and put on new healthy growth. A further inspection will be carried out in the summer to assess the prevalence of the disease on the site and evaluate any impact of measures which are less destructive than felling.

[You will find some interesting news about recent research into ash dieback in the article on page 2.](#)

Management Plan

Regular readers will know that a site like ours requires a well-informed management plan to help the Borough Council and volunteers to know how best to conserve and improve this precious piece of land. In the past year a new plan was commissioned from an outside consultant which provided a detailed description of the biology of the site. We are now embarking on the next crucial

phase: the creation of an action plan which will define what we want the site to look like in the next three-five years and, most importantly, what we should do, and when, in order to achieve that goal.

The new management plan will cover Leckhampton Hill & Charlton Kings Common and Ravensgate Common. There have already been a couple of site visits by Cotswold National Landscape which has been contracted to draw up this new plan. The visits, also attended by the Borough Council and Pete Niblett from FOLK, provided good opportunities for sharing with CNL our local knowledge and our views on the shaping of the plan.

In constructing this plan, the authors will have to be mindful of both the site's biology and its geology, and indeed the interaction between these two. In addition, the plan must pay close attention to the interests, opinions and perceptions of the public, as well as being flexible enough to evolve in the light of any changes which emerge over time. Finally the plan must also be written in terms which volunteers (who may well lack expert knowledge) can understand and then both plan and carry out their works on month-by-month basis.

New Trees

There have been two separate areas which have benefited from the addition of some new trees. Firstly, thanks to the work put in by the Cotswold Wardens, nine native field trees have been planted near the new adder habitat. These replace the end-of-life larch which were felled last year. They were planted as “whips” (young, slender, often unbranched tree, usually 1-2 years old and around 30-100cm tall) and included three each of Silver Birch, Field Maple and Rowan. Large cages have been installed around the new trees and rolling barrels have been provided to carry water from Hill Farm to where they have been planted.



Later, a great many trees were planted on the Reversion Field, particularly to provide shade for the cattle when they are off the main conservation site in the late Spring and Summer months. This project was undertaken by FOLK volunteers.

Here, a number of 2-3m tall Crab Apple, Pear and Wild Cherry trees were planted, along with a hundred or more whips of Silver Birch, Field Maple and Rowan plus some Hawthorn. Watering these is a bit more straightforward as there is already a water supply on the Reversion Field because it is a regular pasture for the cattle. A further task here will be the installation of a tall, deer-proof fence around the newly planted trees, though this will include a couple of gates to ensure ready access. [\(To find out more about FOLK's involvement in this planting, see the work Party Report on pages 17-18\)](#)

Future Works

By the end of March we plan to complete at least two more major projects on the site. Firstly drainage at the entrance to Salterley Quarry car park is to be improved. The current system, which channels water into a drainage pond, has been found to silt up far too quickly. So the drainage system will be upgraded and the pond dug out further, with the additional installation of a vertical "overflow" pipe in the pond to drain away excess water. Once this engineering work has been completed the eroded entrance to the car park will be re-surfaced.

Secondly, a length of the Cotswold Way between Hartley Lane and Cowslip Meadow has been found to be degraded due to excess water. Using a grant from Cotswold National Landscape's *Access for All* fund, sections of path that we have noticed hold water will be resculpted and the drainage improved.

Finally, if both time and weather allow, areas of scrub that have regrown after being cut back in Autumn 2024 will be re-cut. This work will be done using a mechanical flail operated by the contractor who is already on the site for these other works.

Our Green Spaces Apprentice

Georgie Bearder has been on her apprenticeship in Cheltenham for the last two and a half years. She is now nearing the end of her studies in Countryside Ranger HND (Higher National Diploma/Level 4 Apprenticeship) based at the highly regarded Sparsholt College in Winchester.



The qualification covers a wide range of knowledge and practical skills, including using machinery.

This year will see Georgie facing her final assessments. In preparation for one module, she has just completed a “mock” assessment in the skills involved in managing a volunteer working party. This was observed by a member of staff from Sparsholt. The session took place at a drystone walling workshop up on the top of the Hill. It is to the credit of both Georgie and her five volunteers, including three FOLK members, that the workshop took place at all given that the morning brought torrential rain!

To pass this module Georgie needs to show that she can deliver appropriate health and safety briefing, explain what is to be done by the volunteers and why, and then demonstrate the relevant skills as well as supervising - and motivating the group.

The volunteers then split into two groups, each working on different areas of the wall which the wardens are currently re-building. There was a very friendly atmosphere among the group, who were very supportive of Georgie, though everyone was extremely pleased when the session concluded with the very welcome hot drinks she had brought to the work party.

Georgie is particularly grateful for the time which the hugely experienced Cotswold Warden John Heathcote has spent with her teaching her how to do drystone walling. John, who is leading the re-building of this wall (and celebrated his 91st birthday last year) was happy to pass on his knowledge in this skilled art which, without new recruits, could find itself dying out. He even showed her how to incorporate Adder holes in this stretch of wall, as there is a favourable adder basking site just the other side.

The final overall assessment for Georgie’s course will take place in March.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

On a cold November evening, around forty FOLK members gathered at The Wheatsheaf for the Annual General Meeting, thanks to the generosity of the landlord who kindly made no charge for this event. On arrival, attendees were greeted by a splendid display of FOLK activity over the past year. Our Chair, Mike Donnelly, opened the meeting and talked members through the Powerpoint presentation of the annual report.

2025 marked the 25th anniversary of FOLK's formation and Mike began by commending the strong vision set out by the original committee. Throughout its twenty-five years, he noted, FOLK has constantly focused its efforts on four key touchstones: promoting conservation and education, supporting recreational use of the land, promoting the site's SSSI status and national treasures, and liaising with the site's owners, users and trustees.

The Chair noted four key measures of FOLK's success. **Longevity** itself was an achievement, and the group had gained a good **reputation** for its work, including **recognition** for its impact – as seen in the number of awards received over the years. Finally, Mike was proud of the **investment** FOLK made in its volunteers, focusing on training and safety. He also noted FOLK's strong presence at the latest Volunteers event organised by Cheltenham Borough Council to showcase the efforts of the town's many "friends of" groups.

The significant three-year grant which came from a National Grid fund has now ended. This has had a major impact on the quality of the site's many features, particularly for its enjoyment by local people and the many visitors who come here every year. Projects supported by the National Grid funding include improvements to stretches of the Cotswold Way, the expansion of conservation grazing, repairs to the perimeter fencing, conservation of the limekilns and, of course, the reduction of gorse on some of the steepest slopes.



All of these projects, as well as the yearly cycle of maintenance and improvement tasks, have only been possible to deliver because of the tireless support of **FOLK's work party volunteers** who put in tens of thousands of hours of work over the course of the project. In 2025 alone FOLK scheduled 35 work party sessions. This contributed a massive 1,769 volunteer hours (up again on 2024's total). Mike noted that the help given by volunteers from a number of local employers had been greatly appreciated. There has also been increased interest and involvement in the site shown by local schools.

The work parties tackle a huge range of tasks over the course of a year, including improving the habitats for a wide variety of natural species, some of which are categorised as endangered. However, they also support the many improvements to the enjoyment of the site by its thousands of visitors. Such works include path improvement, clearing excess vegetation from drystone walls, opening up views, scrub clearance and mowing significant landmarks like the ancient hillfort and the former quarry sidings.

In describing the work of FOLK volunteers, Mike praised the huge contribution to the site made by the local **Cotswold Wardens**. In particular, he noted their work in rebuilding the drystone wall which runs up from Hartley Lane towards the hillfort, including the newly created memorial wall. He also drew attention to FOLK's partnership working with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust in supporting work to help our population of adders, a nationally endangered species, to thrive on targeted areas of our site.

FOLK continues to grow its membership, which stands at 529. Annual events such as the Charlton Kings fayres have been key to recruitment. In terms of public awareness, the well-run Facebook page has more than 3,000 followers and the FOLK website attracts hundreds of visits. The regular newsletter was also commended for keeping members up to date with FOLK's work, and with the many developments being undertaken to conserve and improve the site. The



production of the special 25th Anniversary edition of the newsletter was particularly praised.

FOLK's finances remain sound, even though members are not required to pay an annual subscription. Grants and donations received in the year covered the cost of all FOLK's mainstream conservation and education activities, and the amount held as reserves at year end was £3,245. This figure had fallen slightly during 2025, with FOLK facing a larger than expected increase in costs, notably its insurance premium and website management. Mike also made clear that FOLK is again very grateful for the long-standing generosity and financial support offered by Cotswold National Landscape, local parish councils, the Borough Council, and many private individuals. As a result, FOLK has sufficient reserves to protect it against future cost increases, but is actively looking into both reducing its overheads and exploiting other potential sources of grants.

Looking forward, Mike drew attention to the fact that our site was now being actively considered for the prestigious award of National Nature Reserve status. He made clear that FOLK would continue to strive to conserve and improve the Hill and Common, enhancing its own knowledge and skills in land management, and also strengthening its links with local young people.

Among the challenges FOLK faces are increased costs and the need to find more people willing to join the Executive Committee so that the energy and commitment of the past twenty-five years can be maintained.

In his final appearance as a member of FOLK's Executive Committee, Mike closed the meeting by thanking everyone for the enormous support he has been given over the years in his various roles within FOLK.

Time to say Thank you

Our current work party coordinator Pete Niblett thanked Mike for his extraordinary twenty years of service to FOLK, including coordinating work parties, acting as vice chair and now chair. He praised the way Mike has acted as a strong ambassador for FOLK on a local and regional stage, in important discussions with the Borough Council, Natural England, Cotswold National Landscape and the steering group for the three-year National Grid-funded project Recovering Cheltenham's Escarpment Grassland.



Mike Donnelly receiving a gift from FOLK of a painting by Susie Gilbert

Mike's energetic involvement in events promoting public understanding of FOLK was commended. This helped boost membership at local fayres and fiestas, alongside his work in continually refreshing and improving FOLK's display boards for public events.

Pete ended by pointing out that all those who have worked alongside Mike over the year have valued his support and wise counsel, underpinned by his deep knowledge of the many facets of the site, adding that, in short, "Every organisation needs someone like you."

Pete was then joined by the Borough Council's Senior Ranger, Wayne Sedgwick, for the presentation of Mike's farewell gift from FOLK: a painting of the site by local artist Susie Gilbert.

The AGM was followed by a talk from our guest speaker, Giles Alder. Giles serves as Volunteer Co-ordinator & Reserve Manager of Tewkesbury NR, and Conservation Officer, Cleeve Common Trust. He talked about his management activities on Cleeve Common, giving a fascinating insight into the complex range of potentially conflicting challenges - which FOLK knows only too well. On both sites, volunteers help to manage a Site of Special Scientific Interest which also boasts important natural and historical features at the same time as offering full public access.

2025 BUTTERFLY REPORT

for Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common

This year saw a couple of new recruits to help with the survey work – Tom and Ali. Unfortunately, as it turned out, Tom found it difficult to find the time to do much, but Ali proved herself adept at spotting both Green Hairstreaks and Chalk Hill Blues!

Fifty-three surveys were completed (varying from 7 to 18 in each section). This was up from the sixty-four completed in 2024 and resulted in a total of 3,516 butterflies counted (also up from the 2,121 in 2024), and consisting of 29 species. Given the far better summer weather in 2025, it came as no surprise that butterfly numbers rebounded from the dismal showing in 2024. However, that is not to say that it was an exceptional year when compared with the long-term average. All but three species were more abundant in 2025 than 2024, but only nine exceeded the ten-year average, this being the period from when the Hopkins fields were included in the survey.

For the first time, Small Copper (seen right) were seen in double figures and clearly benefitted from the hot dry summer with the second generation in August doing particularly well. Indeed, there seems to have been a third generation on some sites, as one was seen during a habitat work party on Longwood Common (Nottingham Hill) on 8th November. Other winners were Dingy Skipper, Large White, Speckled Wood and Gatekeeper.



Small Tortoiseshell continues to be of concern with just 4 sighted (13 year average 78). Silver-washed (2) and Dark Green (10) Fritillaries both had a relatively poor showing, down from highs of 40 in 2019 and 50 in 2022 respectively.

Holly Blue only showed itself once during the first generation flight period and none were seen later in the year. This reflects records from other sites and hopefully is just a result of its fairly regular periodic fluctuation in numbers due to parasitisation.

A few species emerged a week or so earlier than usual, but the main outcome of the hot weather was a more rapid decline in numbers of high summer butterflies.

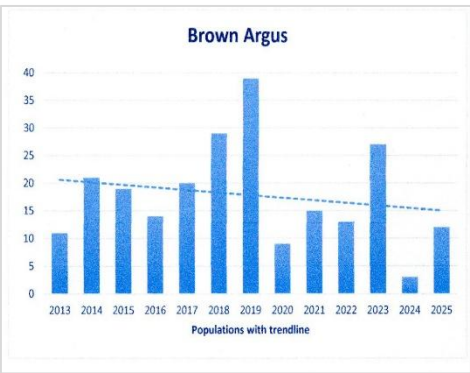
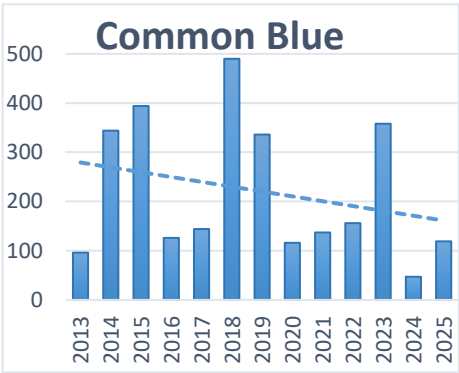


Marbled Whites (seen left) are usually still on the wing until the second or third week in August, but in 2025 none were recorded after the third week in July, and this butterfly had reached peak numbers well in advance of all other years.

A similar trend was observed for Gatekeepers, Ringlets and Meadow Browns, all of which seemed to have shortened their flight periods by about three weeks.

Small Heath numbers were well below their average of 379 and still seem to be on a downward trajectory when looking at the trendline. This is concerning as, on other Cotswold sites, the populations appear to be reasonably stable.

Last year I expressed concern in the decline of the Common Blue and Brown Argus. Whilst both fared better this year, the overall trend is still downwards



The Chalk Hill Blue is hanging on. So there is still hope that they will continue to survive on the slopes above Hartley Lane.

Duke of Burgundy continues to be recorded in reasonable numbers on the lower slopes of Charlton Kings Common, though most are seen off the designated survey route and are therefore counted under a separate recording scheme. For the second year running, none was sighted in Cowslip Meadow, despite habitat management work undertaken a couple of years ago aimed at linking this field to the main site.

By contrast, the Dingy Skipper, after a few poor years, is hopefully beginning to recover, both when looking at four-year averages and year-by-year numbers.



Finally, I am grateful to the four principal surveyors, Peter Sands, Fiona Knee, Andrew Bishop who have continued to walk the hill to count the butterflies, as well as Ali White who joined their ranks this year. My thanks go to them all for their time and efforts.

If anyone else fancies having a perfect excuse for a walk in the sunshine, please do get in touch. Extra help is always useful and appreciated as I hope to continue to continue running this survey for the next couple of years at least.

Serena Meredith
01242 524138
gmeredith308@btinternet.com
January 2026

WORK PARTY REPORT SPRING 2026

Pete Niblett, Work Party Coordinator

Introduction

We are now well into the winter work programme and our priority, given the increasingly hot and dry summers, is to create and maintain fire breaks (seen right) in the large areas of gorse on top of the eastern side of Charlton Kings Common. Indeed, this has been our focus for eight out of the last twelve work parties. The benefit is that not only will it help prevent the spread of fire, but this effort also opens up fresh areas of grass for grazing by the cattle.



Managing the Site

A heads up. FOLK has had an input to the new Management Plan for the Hill which is being produced by Cotswold Natural Landscapes with backing from the Borough Council. A draft will be produced in March and the final version is due in September.

The plan will help prioritise and direct our conservation work more effectively by highlighting the most important areas for flora and fauna. In conjunction with this we will be looking for people to take part in site surveys. Training will be given – so watch this space!

Volunteers

Attendance at work parties (three a month) has steadily increased throughout the year and we now average sixteen volunteers and rising. Well over forty people have attended tasks, contributing 1,769 hours between October 2024 and September 2025.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, it is good to see younger volunteers at weekend work parties - more about this in a future edition. The team-based approach to running the work parties is proving successful and the increasing number of volunteers means that we can get more done.

We are also keen to enhance our skills base by arranging training like the recent session on using brushcutters. This was much appreciated by those who took part.



Two happy brushcutter trainees

One said, “More of us are now trained to operate the brushcutters, so can finally take some of the load off others. We were in the first batch for this, and we spent the day at Tim Bendle’s training facilities near Staunton.

Top quality training, covering everything from health and safety (brushcutters really do need to be treated with respect) to maintenance and use. They also provided a really useful guide that covers all aspects of the training. This is particularly handy as it’s easy to forget things unless you go straight from the training into use.”

Conservation in action



It is always pleasing to see that our conservation work is having a desired effect.

Recently whilst walking across the top of the Common, I spotted several cattle enjoying the recently exposed grass on the ledge along the western side.

They weren't actually meant to be there – so the batteries in their GPS collars must have been low! They had decided to head for some luscious grass in an area cleared of scrub, mainly gorse, by pupils from High School Leckhampton over recent winter seasons. The students returned for another session in mid-February.

Something different!

We normally spend a great deal of time on “slash and burn”. So it was great to be able to plant something for a change! In mid-November we planted an avenue of trees in the ‘Reversion Field’ which is regularly used by the grazier as a birthing

field for the Galloways.

These ladies will need shade in the summer and so we planted fifteen large trees (crab apple, wild cherry and wild pear) and over one hundred smaller native trees. This was quite a session, with a record number of volunteers. Coffee and cake was well earned!



Working with others

During this period we have continued to work with the Cotswold Wardens, this time on two work parties. The first was at the very eastern-most end of the Common, where a combined group of twenty-seven Wardens and FOLK volunteers cleared a large area of gorse. The second, along the Cotswold Way, saw an additional fire break created. On that occasion we had a joint force of twenty-four. With so many volunteers we were able to meet our primary objectives to encourage the well-being of this scarce area of unimproved limestone grassland, as well as to establish and maintain gaps in the gorse. Opening up areas of grass will encourage the cattle to move in and enjoy the newly exposed grassy areas, and this they are clearly doing.

We do occasionally host visits by local companies. On a fine autumn morning FOLK volunteers were joined by seven Deloitte colleagues on their 'Volunteer Day' as part of the firm's commitment to social responsibility and community engagement. A long walk to the eastern end of the Common was needed to begin the task, but seeing the cattle out on the hill after their summer break made it very enjoyable. The objective was to control the intrusion of gorse into the grasslands, where even the paths were constricted by thorny growth.

To burn or not to burn?

Nearly every session of our winter work involves a bonfire to burn the brash. Depending on the layout of each area we do sometimes manage to hide the brash amongst existing scrub, but this isn't always possible. It would, of course, be good if we could find alternative ways to dispose of the cut scrub, but this is not straightforward. Chipping, for example would require bringing machinery onto

the site. Transport and fuelling would probably produce more emissions than the bonfire. I do still hope that we can reduce the need for bonfires and eventually have a smoke free Hill! If you have any thoughts on this, please get on touch.



And finally - an appreciative customer. We just couldn't do what we do without the aid of Charlie and friends. (photo)

Charlie the Galloway inspecting the volunteers' rucksacks

As you can see, there is always plenty to do. So please contact me if you would like to join one of our work parties. Do give it a go - we are a friendly group!

Work Parties are usually held on the second Thursday, third Tuesday and fourth Sunday of each month. Details of the dates and meeting points for upcoming work parties are shown on the "FOLK Work Parties" page of the FOLK website. If we need to cancel a work party (usually because of bad weather) or change the meeting point, details will be posted on the FOLK website and sent via a Work Party WhatsApp group to existing volunteers.

We meet at 9.30am, normally at Tramway Cottage Car Park, Daisy Bank Road, and are on the hill for approximately three hours. Tools are provided by FOLK. For your own safety we ask you to wear stout footwear and bring tough gardening gloves.

For further information you can contact me, Pete Niblett, on 07857 939072 and I would be happy to answer any questions. Alternatively please go to our website where you will find the 'FOLK Work Parties' page on the right hand side of the homepage, or click on this link: <https://www.leckhamptonhill.org.uk/work-parties/>

Otherwise, just send an email to folk.workparty@gmail.com and we will get back to you.

ABOUT FOLK

FOLK is an organisation set up to work with landowners to promote the conservation and management of the ecology, geology and archaeology of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common. We support sustainable recreational and agricultural use of the land. We welcome new members to support and help us in this important work. If you wish to join (either as an individual or as a family) please contact any of the people listed below. ***There is currently no fee for membership.***

Why not have a look at what is new on the FOLK website <http://www.leckhamptonhill.org.uk/> and look us up on Facebook - *Friends of Leckhampton Hill and Charlton Kings Common*.

Contributions to the FOLK Website are always gratefully received.

Contact: webmaster.leckhamptonhill@gmail.com

* * * * *

If you have any comments on the Newsletter or would like to contribute an article to the next edition please contact **Martin Wood** on **01242 231230** or send an email to: martinwood360@gmail.com. Articles of around 500 words, plus a photo if you have one, would be most welcome at any time.

Contact FOLK

Rachel Watson Secretary/Membership: 07419 289594

Pete Niblett, Work Parties: 07857 939072

Mark Dowie, Treasurer: 07872 336006

Martin Wood, Newsletter: 01242 231230

Find the ***Friends of Leckhampton Hill & Charlton Kings Common*** on www.leckhamptonhill.org.uk and on Facebook

The views expressed in the articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of FOLK or its Executive Committee.