



# Summer Newsletter

Your land, your heritage, your future

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The Box Moor Trust

## Learning through play at South Hill



Photo: Simon Pamment

Playtimes are now even more fun for children at a local primary school since the installation of some exciting new outdoor learning equipment, part funded by a Box Moor Trust grant.

In recent years, South Hill Primary School has doubled its intake and the PTA was keen to improve recreation facilities for the pupils. Together with a small grant from County and another donation, the Trust grant of £1,000 helped to fund the creation of the new play area.

Jo Wellbelove, Assistant Head Teacher and lead teacher for science, said "The outdoor learning equipment purchased with the Box Moor Trust grant is in regular use by our pupils. Sited within our extensive

grounds, the learning hut and observation tower help to enhance role play".

South Hill is one of many local schools who enjoy coming to the Trust for education trips. Almost all of their 300 pupils have attended full day visits this academic year to learn about the properties of natural and man-made materials and plants and trees, in line with the curriculum.

## Special occasion for The Box Moor Trust

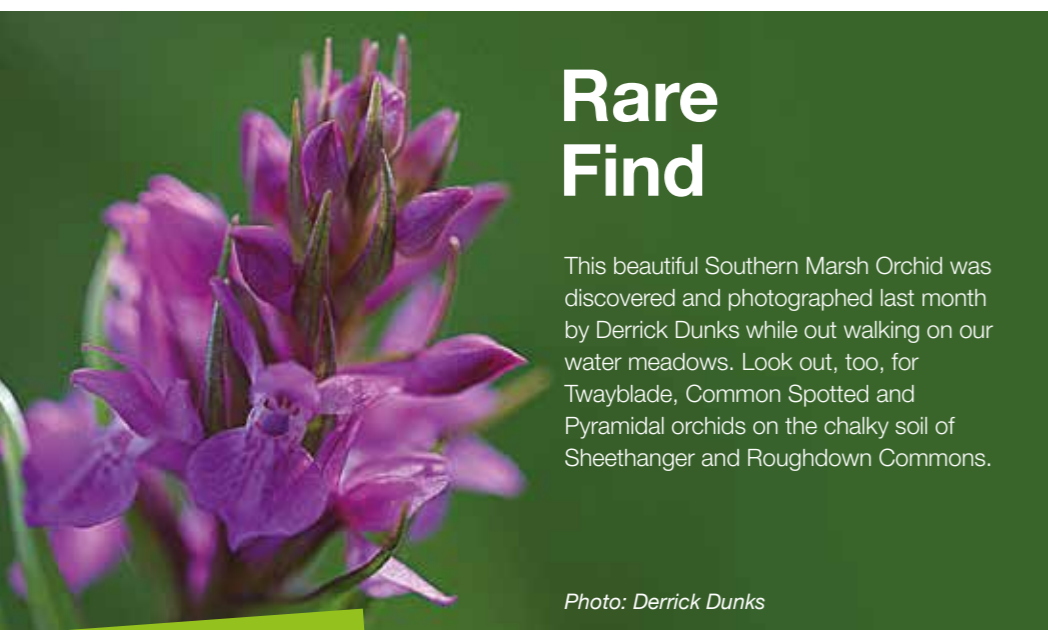


Photo: Alan Davison

In May, a delegation from the Trust was highly privileged to be invited to meet Her Royal Highness the Queen when she visited Berkhamsted School. It was a proud day for all those involved with the Trust to learn

that our good work had been recognised. It was particularly special because it was the gift of land from Queen Elizabeth 1st over 4 centuries ago that led to the formation of the Trust, so this day gave a unique Royal link.

Here, Chairman David Kirk introduces Her Majesty to Administration Manager Jean Sniders, long serving volunteer Roland Howard and long serving Trustees Dennis Furnell, George Tite and Peter Phillips.



## Rare Find

This beautiful Southern Marsh Orchid was discovered and photographed last month by Derrick Dunks while out walking on our water meadows. Look out, too, for Twayblade, Common Spotted and Pyramidal orchids on the chalky soil of Sheethanger and Roughdown Commons.

Photo: Derrick Dunks

## Get the Picture!!

Our calendar photo competition closes on Friday 12th August, so don't miss your chance to enter! The theme is "Countryside on Hemel's Doorstep" and entry is free. Twelve images will be chosen for the Trust's 2017 calendar – the prize for the winner will be £100, with £75 for second place and £50 for third. Full details and application forms can be found on our website.

## Blue Walk

The first in a series of updates to our colour-coded walks, the Blue Walk leaflet has been reprinted and new way markers put up to guide you around the route. There is quite a significant change from the old route, which now takes in Harding's Moor and Bulbourne Moor (a really interesting and picturesque part of the estate), whilst leaving out a section that in the previous leaflet took walkers away from Trust land altogether. Copies of the leaflet are available from the Box Moor Trust Centre or can be downloaded from the website. It is planned that the other walks will also be updated in the near future.



Contact Us

The Box Moor Trust Centre, London Road, Hemel Hempstead, HP1 2RE  
Tel: 01442 253300, Reg. Charity No. 206142

Did you know?

The Box Moor Trust is now on and @BoxMoorTrust



# Cricket Bat Willows

The Box Moor Trust has a longstanding association with the game of cricket not only hosting two cricket clubs on its land but, since the 1900s, producing cricket bat willows as a commercial crop for the industry. This summer a number of the bat willows were ready for harvesting and have been felled and the timber sold to J.S. Wright & Sons of Chelmsford, Essex.

There is only one species of willow – *Salix alba caerulea* – used to make cricket bats. It is a special hybridised tree, which has been bred for the whiteness of its wood. The best sites for growing are alongside river and brook water courses and low-lying, often disused water meadows.

Four year old willow sets are planted from mid-November to early March. Their ongoing care is very important; trees neglected even for one year during their lifetime can have little or no commercial value.

The life cycle of a commercially grown tree is around fifteen to twenty years. Once felled the trunks are cut into clefts, roughly 16 per tree depending on size, and sold on to bat makers. The raw clefts are then rolled out and shaved to form the bat. It takes about a year to then fully season the bat.



Design by Play Innovation

## Wharf Road play area

Dacorum Borough Council's play area on Blackbirds Moor in Boxmoor is set to have a complete refurbishment as part of a programme of works to improve children's play areas across the borough. The Wharf Road playground will be updated as part of a joint initiative with the Box Moor Trust to provide more inclusive equipment incorporating sensory features, swings

and play panels as well as the traditional climbing frame, slide and swings. Joe Guiton, Neighbourhood Action Team Leader said, "With newer, more interesting equipment available imaginative play and social interaction is encouraged. Better weather is on the way and we hope the improved play area will get people out to have fun with their family and friends."

## Nature Tots

In September, we will be launching Nature Tots, an exciting new group for children aged from 18 months to 4 years and their parents/carers. Join us for an outdoor adventure on the third Tuesday of the month at The Old Barn, Westbrook Hay

(term time only). Times: 10-11.30am or 1.30-3pm. Cost: £1.20 per child, per session, payable termly in advance. Starts on Tuesday September 20th 2016. Booking is essential; telephone 01442 253300 or see the website to download a booking form.

## Dogs and Trust land

The Trust welcomes responsible dog walkers to the land and is committed to working with owners to ensure that all visitors have a positive experience. To that end, we are producing a leaflet that sets out the main responsibilities when walking a dog and advises on what we mean by proper control in everyday situations.

Ironically, publication of this leaflet coincides with yet another dog attack on Trust sheep (the third incident this year). This latest attack resulted in one Norfolk Horn lamb

being euthanized as a result of the injuries it sustained and a second being severely bitten, as can be seen in the photograph.

Peter Ablett, chair of the Trust's Estate & Land committee, said "It is a criminal offence to let dogs attack or worry stock. All dog walkers must, therefore, take the utmost care to keep dogs under close control wherever there is grazing or where the presence of stock is a possibility. The law is clear. Not to do so has devastating consequences for all concerned."



Photo: Robert Mansbridge



Photo: Jan Maddern

## Belties on the Mooove!

**In a new collaboration with DBC, eight of the Trust's Belted Galloway cattle have been provided on loan to graze at Bunkers Park in Nash Mills during the summer months. In a special ceremony on Saturday 14th May, local residents watched as Cllr Gbola Adeleke (The Mayor of Dacorum at the time) cut a ribbon to officially welcome the cows to Bunkers Park.**

The cattle have freedom to graze in an area known as 'Mattens', which comprises three linked fields all surrounded by hedges and fences. As a breed, Belted Galloways are known for their placid temperament and the Trust's cattle are used to having people walking through their fields, so they were an obvious candidate for grazing the open access meadows of Bunkers Park.

Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, Sustainability and Regulatory Services,

Cllr Janice Marshall, said: "In the last few years these fields have been managed by hay cutting. However, as a more environmentally friendly method of managing the fields, cattle have now been chosen to graze the land."

Bunkers Park received the Green Flag award in 2015. Green Flag is a national Government award designed to raise standards of management of parks and open spaces.

## Shout out for the Scouts!

On Saturday June 25th, 1st Kings Langley Scouts did a sterling job removing over 200 tree guards and stakes in Bovingdon Brickworks. The group of boys and girls did 6 hours conservation work in the sunshine towards a community award.

*well done all!*



Photo: Caroline Evans

## Diary Dates

*Supported by the Trust:*

**Dacorum Folk Fest:**  
Saturday 10th September,  
Fishery Wharf Café  
After three very successful years, Dacorum Folk Fest is becoming a firm fixture in the local music calendar. An exciting partnership with Boxmoor Folk and Roots means that the festival is back in 2016, bigger and better than ever before. Thanks to the Box Moor Trust, the afternoon performances will be free, followed by an affordably priced evening gala concert. For tickets and further information, visit [www.dacorumfolkfestival.com](http://www.dacorumfolkfestival.com)

**Old Town Music and Arts Fair:**  
Friday 7th & Saturday 8th October,  
St Mary's Church More details in autumn newsletter

*Organised by the Trust:*

**Autumn Festival:**  
Saturday 15th October, Blackbirds Moor

**Conker Festival:**  
Sunday 16th October, Blackbirds Moor

Please watch our website for further details.

## Summer Fun!

Summer Family Activity Days: Thursday 28th July and Thursday 11th August, 10.00am-12 noon - Trails, activities and crafts for children and their families. Based at The Old Barn, off Westbrook Hay Drive, London Road, Hemel Hempstead. "Tree-mendous Trees and Powerful Plants" on 28th July; "Birds, Bees and Butterflies" on 11th August. There is limited car parking at the Old Barn; spaces here are for the less mobile and families with very young children. If necessary, parking is also available at The Box Moor Trust Centre on London Road. From here a short, pleasant walk will direct you to the Old Barn. Please note that children must be supervised by an adult at all times. There is a suggested donation of £2.50 per child. No need to book, just drop in.