

# OUTSTANDING CHILTERNNS

Explore & enjoy the beautiful Chilterns landscape 2021/22

Events, guided  
walks & festivals  
in the Chilterns

---

## CHILTERNNS FARMERS

Leading the way in  
nature's recovery

---

An introduction  
to FUNGI  
SPOTTING

---

HS2's IMPACT  
on our Chalk Streams

---

Foodie walks:  
a pick of our favourite  
walks with cafes  
& farm shops



**CHILTERNNS**  
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Studley Green

YOUR LOCAL DOG FRIENDLY GARDEN CENTRE



# A stones throw away from your weekend walk

EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR YOUR GARDEN UNDER ONE ROOF

## **STUDLEY GREEN**

Wycombe Road (A40)  
Studley Green, High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
HP14 3UX  
01494 483761

## **STORE OPENING TIMES**

Monday - Saturday: 9am - 6pm, Sunday: 10:30am - 4:30pm

## **CAFE OPENING HOURS**

Monday - Saturday: 9am - 4pm, Sunday: 10am - 4pm

[www.capitalgardens.co.uk](http://www.capitalgardens.co.uk)



**CAPITAL GARDENS**  
The Natural Place for Gardening

# WELCOME

## A note from the Editor



I can't quite believe it's been a year since our last edition of Outstanding Chilterns magazine. Our team continues to do a great job while largely working from home and, since Covid-19 restrictions have lifted, they've been delighted to be able to get back out and about for site visits and get the momentum going again on some fantastic projects that you can read about in this magazine.

In this edition we're delighted to focus on the fabulous food and drinks producers of the Chilterns. Check out page 4 for some of our favourite cafes and farm shops that are near to some wonderful countryside walks. Also, we're thrilled to be able to hold several festivals and events over the next 12 months, including the ever-popular Chilterns Walking Festival and a mouth-watering food and drinks festival. Look at page 14-15 for information and how to book.

In this issue you can also discover the delights of the beautiful market town of Marlow, uncover stories of Amersham old town and be inspired to learn something new with Linda Seward's excellent introduction to fungi in the Chilterns.

Finally, I'd encourage you learn how Chilterns farmers are leading the way in nature's recovery on page 12 and find out why we're so concerned about the impact of HS2 on our chalk streams.

I hope you enjoy the topics covered in this magazine and that it inspires you to explore and enjoy all that the Chilterns landscape has to offer.

Vicki

Vicki Pearce, Editor  
vpearce@chilternsaonb.org

Sign up to our monthly e-newsletter for the latest news, events and exclusive reader competitions:  
[bit.ly/CCBsignup](https://bit.ly/CCBsignup)

## ABOUT THE CHILTERN CONSERVATION BOARD

Outstanding Chilterns magazine is published annually by the Chilterns Conservation Board. Established in 2004, the Board is a public body with two key purposes:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Chilterns AONB
- To increase understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB

It has 23 board members drawn from across the Chilterns and a staff team of 20 based in Chinnor.



Please recycle this magazine when you are finished with it – don't forget to share it with your friends and family first!

## CONTENTS

- 3 Chief Executive's Letter
- 4 Pick of our favourite foodie walks
- 6 Good news for beacons of the past
- 7 How HS2 could threaten the Chilterns' chalk streams
- 8 Planning for an extended AONB
- 10 Guided history & heritage walks in Amersham
- 12 Nature's recovery – farmers leading the way in the Chilterns
- 14 Chilterns festivals & food
- 16 Save our streams & protect 'Britain's Great Barrier Reef'
- 17 Chalkscapes – connecting urban communities in the North Chilterns
- 18 Why is grazing livestock a central part of nature conservation in the Chilterns?
- 20 Messing about in Marlow
- 22 Fungi spotting in the Chilterns
- 24 Red Kites – a success story?
- 26 Chilterns young explorers

## CREDITS & THANKS

### Chilterns Conservation Board:

90 Station Road, Chinnor, Oxon OX39 4HA  
Tel: 01844 355500 Email: [office@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:office@chilternsaonb.org)  
[chilternsaonb.org](http://chilternsaonb.org)

**Design credit:** Blooberry Creative Ltd, 01494 864851,  
[blooberrycreative.co.uk](http://blooberrycreative.co.uk)

**With special thanks to** John Waxman, Mary Tebje, Linda Seward, Amersham Museum, Affinity Water

**Main cover image:** Watlington Hill, July 2021 credit  
Dave Olinski

**Advertising:** Qwerty Advance Publications,  
0118 930 2222, [joanne@qwertyltd.com](mailto:joanne@qwertyltd.com)



@chilternsaonb



CHILTERN  
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

Photography for  
**Weddings**

**Brian Carroll**  
Photography

Moments of outstanding natural beauty

07544 646497  
briancarroll.photography

**AA** **AA**  
Restaurants

**NAGS HEAD**  
GREAT MISSENDEN  
COUNTRY INN & RESTAURANT

WWW.NAGSHEADBUCKS.COM  
01494 862200 | LONDON ROAD | HP16 0DG  
FOOD SERVED EVERY DAY LUNCH & DINNER  
BAR OPEN ALL DAY EVERY DAY | SUNDAY LUNCH NOW 12 - 7PM

**CHILTERN'S GIFTS**

Celebrate the seasons in the Chiltern Hills with a NEW range of beautifully designed gifts

Perfect ideas for Christmas, birthdays & anniversaries

- Kitchen & Homewares
- 2022 Calendars
- Christmas Cards
- Wall Art

Designed in the Chilterns, made in Great Britain

VISIT [chilternsgifts.co.uk](http://chilternsgifts.co.uk)  
JOIN US  
f @ChilternsGifts

**THE CHILTERN'S A - Z**  
A celebration of the Chiltern Hills

**MISSENDEN ABBEY**

Set amidst 10 acres of beautiful grounds, this 12th Century medieval abbey offers the perfect setting to celebrate with friends and family for all occasions.

Afternoon Tea  
Bed and Breakfast  
Weddings / Private Functions  
Conferences  
Public Events  
57 en-suite bedrooms

To find out more call us on 01494 866811 or visit our website at [www.missendenabbey.co.uk](http://www.missendenabbey.co.uk)

**MISSENDEN ABBEY**  
London Road, Great Missenden, Bucks, HP16 0BD  
01494 866811  
[sales@missendenabbey.ltd.uk](mailto:sales@missendenabbey.ltd.uk)  
[www.missendenabbey.co.uk](http://www.missendenabbey.co.uk)

# CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S LETTER

Welcome to the latest edition of Outstanding Chilterns magazine. I am delighted to introduce this issue by sharing some good news for the future of the Chilterns.

In June, the Government published a Written Ministerial Statement setting out its ambition to bring more people closer to nature and increase opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of our special landscapes. At the same time, Natural England announced that it will explore extending the boundary of the Chilterns AONB as part of its ambitious new Landscape Designation Programme.

We welcome the new opportunities this will provide for caring for more special features of the Chilterns that are currently outside the designated area. In the interview on pages 8-9, Dr Matt Thomson, our Planner, discusses what this might mean for the Chilterns landscape and its communities.

Linked to this exciting development is the Government's new Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme. This is a fantastic opportunity for England's National Parks and AONBs to work with farmers to achieve positive outcomes for the environment while also supporting sustainable farm businesses. The Chilterns Conservation Board doesn't own any land in the Chilterns and, with farmland covering around 60% of the Chilterns, the key to our success is working in partnership with the many landowners and farmers who we know want to make a difference.

The new programme invites applications for grants for projects that support nature's recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide opportunities for people to discover the landscape and cultural heritage, or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses. This is the first-time protected landscapes have been directly involved in delivering the Government's ambitions for farming and land management in England, so it's a very exciting opportunity.

Sadly, it's not all good news for the Chilterns. In recent months we've become increasingly concerned at the impact of HS2 on this special landscape, especially the impact that tunnelling through the chalk aquifer will have on our rare and fragile chalk streams. You can read more about our concerns and the action we are taking on page 7.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted many inequalities in society, including inequalities of access to public green space. An important ambition for us is to make the Chilterns accessible not only to more people, but also to a wider range of people, so that everyone can enjoy and benefit from this special landscape. Inside, you'll find examples of the range of projects and events that we're organising. These include an introduction to our exciting new Chalkscapes project which aims to connect the urban communities of Luton and Dunstable to our stunning North Chilterns landscapes.



I'll end on some more good news. In July 2021, the Chilterns Conservation Board and the Chiltern Society were awarded a grant from the Green Recovery Challenge Fund of £294,000. Focussing on the nature and communities of the Chilterns' chalk streams and wetland habitats, the grant will fund a suite of schemes developed by the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project, combining practical restoration and enhancement with education and engagement activity. We're hoping practical work will start by the Autumn 2021.

**"Key to our success is working in partnership with the many landowners and farmers who we know want to make a difference"**

I hope this issue of Outstanding Chilterns will give you more ideas for enjoying the Chilterns and all that it has to offer. From food and drink festivals with local producers, opportunities to volunteer, to cafes with fantastic countryside walks nearby. From visiting market towns to taking part in arts projects and events, we hope the magazine will inspire you to get involved and venture into the Chilterns for relaxation, exercise and enjoyment.

**Dr Elaine King,  
Chief Executive**



# PICK OF OUR FAVOURITE FOODIE WALKS

With cafes and farm shops



Here are a few special places in the Chilterns, some of them new on the scene, and all with beautiful walking routes.

## SOUTHERN CHILTERN: WOODLAND WALKS, NATURE RESERVES, CHEESE AND CRAFTS!

- **The Maker Space at the Crown** is a welcome new addition, an historic Chilterns pub transformed into a café by Nuffield common. With craft workrooms in the adjoining barn where you can attend a range of art and crafts workshops or purchase art supplies and handmade gifts. Located right next to the Ridgeway National Trail, there are lots of walks on the doorstep and the National Trust Nuffield House and gardens are opposite.
- **Nettlebed Creamery** in Oxfordshire produce a delicious range of award-winning cheeses using the milk from their organic herd of cows. They have opened a 'Cheese Shed' on site where you can purchase cheese toasties, smoothies, cakes and other snacks. They also stock a range of local produce in their shop. There is plenty of outdoor seating and a covered barn. They are child and dog friendly and there are lots of walks from Nettlebed, including the Nettlebed woodland and wildlife walk and Nettlebed to Warburg Nature Reserve.
- **Blue Tin farm shop and café** is located at a high point of the wooded Chiltern Hills with spectacular views across the Oxfordshire Vale. You'll find it hidden down a narrow country lane a couple of miles from Stoke Row. They sell a range of local produce, in addition to their own free-range meat. The café is a popular refuelling spot for walkers and cyclists. Why not combine a visit to the café with the nearby Ipsden and Hailey stile-free walk, or a jaunt around Stoke Row common?

- **Spire and Spoke** in Watlington is a popular pub/café for walkers and cyclists. There is a wood-fired pizza oven and mountains of cake for hungry visitors, with plenty of outdoor tipis and sheds providing covered outdoor seating. Lots of walks and rides start from Watlington including the Watlington circular, a four-mile walk taking in some wonderful Chilterns scenery including rolling chalk downland, beech woodlands and ancient pathways. Or try the social-distance friendly six-mile walk, aptly named "Watlington hills and views" that follows a stretch of the Ridgeway National Trail and skirts the edge of Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve.

## HEART OF THE CHILTERN: CHALK STREAMS, HISTORIC VILLAGES AND FOOD ON THE FARM

- **Crestyl Coffee** is new on the scene, an outdoor refreshment stop offering a range of drinks, snacks and ice cream for walkers and cyclists on the go. It is located on the Chess Valley Walk, close to Chenies. It is surrounded by watercress beds which were farmed commercially here in the clear chalk water of the River Chess until recently. It's open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm. The picturesque village of Chenies offers further refreshment options, The Red Lion pub has a great range of local craft ales, and the Bedford Arms has a tempting menu and large outdoor garden. For those wanting a slightly longer walk, The Chess Valley Walk is a ten-mile linear walk through the Chilterns following the River Chess from Rickmansworth to Chesham.





- **Laceys Farm** at Lane End is a fabulous farm shop stocking their own dairy products, including luscious creamy ice cream from their herd of Guernsey cows. The Grouse & Ale pub or Strawberry Grove Café in nearby Lane End are popular choices for snacks and lunch, with seasonal local produce. There are lots of walks on the local common such as Bolter End Farm walk, a two mile easy-going stile-free walk around the borders of Lane End village, through fields and woods.
- **Koko's** is a gourmet food trailer recently opened next to Shardeloes Lake, near Old Amersham, with rustic outdoor seating in a lovely, wooded setting. If you decide it's too nice to leave, then there are some new lakeside glamping tipis. It is on route of the stile-free walk from Amersham to Little Missenden or check out walks from the Misbourne Valley.
- **Buckmoorend Farm** near Wendover has a farm shop open Tuesday to Sunday. They also have a kitchen serving hot food on weekends including burgers made from their own herd of cows. The popular Ridgeway National Trail runs alongside the farm and there are lots of other footpaths and bridleways on the doorstep, making it an ideal stop-off for walkers and cyclists. The nearby market town of Wendover offers more tempting cafes including the Lady Grey tearoom and No2 Pound Street deli.
- Previously a pub, the **Red Lion** tearoom near West Wycombe is a popular choice for walkers, cyclists and leisure visitors, surrounded as it is by classic Chilterns woodlands and the National Trust Bradenham Estate with its choice of walks. It is a welcoming and cosy tearoom, with outdoor seating. If you have time, why not include a visit to nearby Hughenden Manor or try out one of the West Wycombe and Bradenham Walks.

### NORTHERN CHILTERNs: ROLLING DOWNLAND, CAKE ON THE CANAL AND WILDLIFE TRAILS

- **Musette Café** is based on a farm in the picturesque village of Aldbury near Tring. It was set up as a destination cycle café and has now become a staple for walkers, trail runners, families who love the outdoors – and all those who enjoy good food and original art on display. The café is just off the Ridgeway National Trail and the Ashridge Drovers circular walk passes nearby.
- **The Brownlow Café** is an outdoor café next to the Bridgewater Monument, at the heart of the National Trust Ashridge Estate. They serve sandwiches, baguettes, homemade cakes and breakfast baps. It is a wonderful setting, surrounded by walks, rides, a children's natural play area and the beautiful woodlands and commons of the Ashridge Estate. There are several walks around the Estate, including The Wildlife Walk (two miles), Butterflies Trail and The Boundary Trail (16 miles) and the 'Ashridge walks for all' path which is likely to be suitable for people with impaired mobility and users of wheelchairs.
- **Fishery Wharf Canal-side Café** is on the Grand Union Canal near Hemel Hempstead and close to the Box Moor Estate with its numerous waymarked walks and programme of events. It offers rustic charm, a tranquil setting on the waters edge and delicious home-made cake and snacks. A five-mile circular walk that explores both the historic Grand Union Canal and the countryside in and around the Boxmoor Trust Estate (see [www.fisherywharfcfe.co.uk](http://www.fisherywharfcfe.co.uk) for details).



Visit the Chilterns AONB website for more information. Details of all the walks mentioned in this article can be found on the interactive map on the Chilterns AONB website. Visit [www.chilternsaonb.org/explore-enjoy/interactive-map](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/explore-enjoy/interactive-map)

## GG Wildlife Experiences

*"Wonderful Experience Highly Recommended!"*  
Tina349 - TripAdvisor

*"Amazing Kingfisher Experience"*  
S Parker - TripAdvisor

*"A Fantastic way to understand local wildlife"*  
D Nardini - Facebook

*"Brilliant for Bird & Nature Lovers!"*  
Marxselisa - TripAdvisor

Guided Walks - Nature Breaks  
Photography Tutorials - Boat Trips

[www.ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk](http://www.ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk)

## FARM P.E. MEAD & SONS SHOP

Purveyors of Home Produced and Speciality Foods

Tea Room at Wilstone Nr Tring HP234NT  
Tel: 01442 828478

[www.chilterncoldpressedrapeseedoil.co.uk](http://www.chilterncoldpressedrapeseedoil.co.uk)

chiltern cold pressed rapeseed oil

## PETERLEY MANOR FARM

EST. 1800

A family-run farm in the Chiltern Hills  
Farm Shop - Yurt Cafe - Plants

Open Tuesday-Sunday [www.peterleymanorfarm.co.uk](http://www.peterleymanorfarm.co.uk) 01494 863566

# GOOD NEWS FOR BEACONS OF THE PAST



Dr Wendy Morrison, Project Manager, *Beacons of the Past: Hillforts in the Chilterns Landscape* shares some exciting news and updates about progress being made to preserve and discover more about the Chilterns hillforts.

Last year, we reported the discovery of a new hillfort in the Chilterns – an exciting prize as we headed into the final year of our project. Scheduled to end in October of 2021, we should be winding up our work, but I am delighted to report that we have received permission from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to extend the running time of the project until 30 September 2022! This gives us nearly a whole extra year to do amazing things, and to make up for lost time with a lot of our hands-on activities, once things begin to become a bit safer for everyone.

The LiDAR Portal has exceeded all expectations, with over 9,600 registered users, and our Citizen Scientists have now recorded over 15,000 features. Despite the challenges of the last year, trying to progress in the face of pandemic and lockdowns, we have still managed to stay connected with our dedicated volunteers who are doing great research on the archaeology of the Chilterns landscape. We have, since the beginning of First Lockdown, held over 50 online training events attended by nearly 500 people. We've given talks to 20 groups, comprising over 1200 listeners! A lot of that has been thanks to the long reaching arm of the Zoom talk, but we also hope that when we return to village halls in person, that we will be meeting lots more enthusiastic people. We also look forward to getting stuck into some practical works very soon, such as scrub bashing, surveying, and fingers crossed, maybe some more excavation.

2021 has seen the public face of our prehistoric Chilterns landscape really take front and centre stage. First, we were featured in two major magazines, *British Archaeology* and *GeoConnexion*. Then there was a feature on BBC's *Countryfile* (still available on iPlayer) which was not only a lot of fun to film but helped to add to our Citizen Science army! Indeed, we were briefly victims of our own success, as we discovered the site crashed twice—once when the programme aired on its Sunday evening slot, and again on the following Sunday when there was a morning repeat!



Ivinghoe Beacon

We are also excited about the completion of most of our bespoke artwork that reconstructs the hillforts and their setting as they may have likely looked several millennia ago. These images are invaluable not only for bringing a site to life for visitors, but also for helping educators make prehistory as exciting to their students as we know it can be! Further to that, we are in the process of creating 3D virtual models of prehistoric artefacts and accompanying video clips to make available to schools, so they can explore them safely and maybe have a go at creating some of the objects themselves.

In Autumn 2021, we look forward to returning to an excavation at Seven Ways Plain, Burnham Beeches, and hopefully, a larger community dig there in April of 2022.



LiDAR model of Ivinghoe Beacon

If you want to stay in the loop and get updates on the project, or receive our newsletter, the *Hillfortian Times*, sign up at <http://bit.ly/ChilfortsNews> and be sure to visit the LiDAR portal at <https://chilternsbeacons.org>



# HOW HS2 COULD THREATEN THE CHILTERN'S CHALK STREAMS

Concerns about the impact of HS2 on the Chilterns landscape have existed since its inception. While the destruction of ancient woodlands has made headlines, less media attention has been paid to the impact on local rivers and particularly on the chalk aquifer.

## What does this mean?

The chalk of this special landscape acts both as a giant sponge and a natural filtering system providing clean, clear water. The globally scarce chalk streams of the Chilterns rely on the aquifer for their flows, and the human population relies on water pumped from the aquifer for some of its drinking water supply.

The construction of HS2 involves boring two tunnels through the Chilterns chalk, 10.5 metres in diameter and 16 kilometres

long. Tunnelling will cause permanent changes to groundwater movement, and risks introducing pollutants to water stored in the aquifer. The tunnel will also pass directly underneath the River Misbourne.

Calls for full disclosure and a public consultation on this issue have not been answered and tunnelling into the chalk aquifer has now begun. We remain deeply concerned about potential impacts.

### POLLUTION RISK

We are concerned that sediments and pollutants resulting from the tunnel boring process will be carried through the aquifer, impacting rivers and water supplies both during construction and once the railway is in operation. HS2 has already self-reported one incident of pollution of the aquifer close to the vent shaft at Chalfont St. Giles which resulted in the loss of 1,744m<sup>3</sup> of bentonite into the aquifer.

### ABSTRACTION

A huge volume of water is required for tunnelling – the latest estimate is up to 10 million litres of water a day (equivalent of four days' water supply for the whole population of Amersham). It is still unclear where this water will come from or how the contaminated wastewater will be processed and disposed of.

A great deal of campaigning in recent years has resulted in a reduction to the amount of water abstracted by water companies in order to protect precious chalk streams. We are now extremely concerned that any water requirements beyond the planned quantities would be taken from chalk streams that are only just recovering their flow levels. HS2 Ltd.'s water requirements will reverse this and decrease flows in the rivers once again.

### GROUNDWATER FLOWS

HS2 has stated that based on current estimates, cement grout used to line the tunnel could infiltrate up to 10 metres into the surrounding rock in every direction. Paul Jennings, chairman of the River Chess Association explains 'With two tunnels this could mean a 60m+ cemented barrier through the chalk... So, taking two 16.7km long tunnels the volume impacted (could be) 24.4 million cubic metres.'

Changes to groundwater flows could be significant. We don't know how this could affect existing abstraction points (used to supply us with drinking water) or river flows. We don't know if these estimates are likely to change.

### RIVER FLOWS

The chalk the machines will be boring through is known to be deeply fractured and poorly consolidated. The machines will tunnel a mere 20m beneath the River Misbourne at Chalfont St. Giles and again at Shardeloes Lake (Little Missenden). Disturbance to the riverbed may cause water to drain away, leading to permanent damage to this rare chalk stream habitat and loss of wildlife.

Damage to the banks of the River Misbourne has already occurred during the installation of a bridge for a temporary construction road. This has directly contributed to flooding of a nearby field. We are also concerned about the potential loss of flow to the Wendover springs which feed the Wendover arm of the Grand Union Canal. This could have far-reaching effects not only to the Wendover and Castle Park streams but also to the R. Bulbourne.



The Misbourne at Shardeloes. The two HS2 tunnels will pass less than 20m beneath this fragile habitat.



River water spilling into the floodplain through a damaged section of the bank of the R. Misbourne at Bottom House Farm Lane. Credit Allen Beechey

The Chilterns Conservation Board, along with local partner organisations, continues to seek reassurances about plans to monitor and mitigate against potential impacts. Our full position statement is available at [www.chilternsaonb.org](http://www.chilternsaonb.org)

# PLANNING FOR AN EXTENDED AONB

Interview with  
The Chilterns  
Conservation  
Board's Planner  
Dr Matt Thomson

Natural England – the national agency that advises the Government on England's natural environment – has recently committed to exploring a 'boundary extension' for the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). And the Government itself is proposing to streamline and modernise the development planning system in England, with a stated aim of ensuring that more land is available for development where it is needed. But what might this all mean for people living in or near the Chilterns AONB? We spoke to The Chilterns Conservation Board's Planner, Dr Matt Thomson, to get an expert view.



"Bringing more features into one designated area will not only make their conservation easier, but it will also create a more coherent identity for the Chilterns as a whole, inspiring local people and strengthening the Chilterns' status as a visitor destination."

Matt is an experienced planning professional who took up his role at the Chilterns Conservation Board in June 2020. He previously worked for local authorities in and around the Chilterns in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire. At a national level he worked for the Royal Town Planning Institute and CPRE, the countryside charity. Working on planning matters for the Chilterns Conservation Board, there's a lot of ground for him to cover (literally and metaphorically!), so he is supported in his role by a part-time planning consultant, Dr Mike Stubbs.

**OCM:** In what ways might an AONB boundary extension be beneficial?

**MT:** What has been designated as the AONB since 1965 is only about a half of the chalk landscape of the Chilterns. Many unique features including chalk streams, beech woods, chalk grasslands and hillforts actually lie outside the current AONB boundary and, as things stand, it is difficult to protect and manage them properly. Bringing more of these features into one designated area will not only make their conservation easier, but it will also create a more coherent identity for the Chilterns as a whole, inspiring local people and strengthening the Chilterns' status as a visitor destination.

**OCM:** What areas would you like to see brought within an extended boundary?

**MT:** The Chilterns AONB Management Plan says that we would like to see more of the Chilterns chalk landscape designated. The principle area of interest is in effect National Character Area 110: Chilterns, as defined by Defra and Natural England. Our initial thinking is that all of this NCA should be looked at to assess which parts that currently lie outside the AONB meet the designation criteria.

But although the NCA might constitute the main area of search, there is also merit in looking slightly beyond this – for example, to places outside the NCA which offer great views of the Chalk scarp or where the lower reaches of Chiltern chalk streams are located.

**OCM:** The CCB originally put in a request for an extension in 2013, so what has given impetus to this process recently?

**MT:** Natural England has national oversight of 44 protected landscapes and receives a lot of requests of this type. It's also a complex process and so in signalling our desire for a boundary extension, we weren't necessarily expecting an immediate response from them. The 2019 Landscapes Review led by Julian Glover has brought the future of the Chilterns AONB into sharper focus, but in terms of the expansion issue it has perhaps been the Prime Ministerial commitment to increase the amount of protected



Planning – development in Chinnor on outskirts of Chilterns AONB 2018. credit John Waxman

landscape in England to 30% by 2030 that has been pivotal. But in any case, the concept of the Chilterns landscape as a whole acting as an essential ‘green lung’ in a region of very rapid growth is generally gaining more traction.

**OCM: Didn't the CCB also apply for the Chilterns to become a National Park?**

**MT:** We did, and still do, think the best way to conserve the Chilterns landscape is as a National Park, and the independent Landscapes Review which advised Government on the future of National Parks and AONBs agreed with us. However, that review also recommended changes to what it means to be a National Park, which could take years to put in place, so the Government isn't proposing to designate any new National Parks for the foreseeable future. Instead, alongside the proposed extension to the Chilterns, Natural England wants us to work with them, local authorities and other stakeholders to establish new ways to manage the Chilterns environment. This could help set the template for how National Parks are managed in the future, so we could still be moving towards National Park status, but by a different route.

**OCM: What, broadly, are the pros and cons of being within the AONB?**

**MT:** It's worth highlighting that most of the areas likely to be looked at for inclusion are already covered by Green Belt designation, which often can and does offer more protection in a development planning sense. But AONB status does bring with it a duty for the Chilterns Conservation Board, the local authorities and other public bodies to promote the economic vitality of the area, provided this is compatible with the AONB. So, opening something like a farm shop might be easier, provided of course the shop meets design criteria appropriate to the AONB.

The Government's 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' proposals, announced on the same day that Natural England announced that it will consider the boundary extension, involve a system of subsidies for farmers undertaking environmental works on their land and, in the case of the Chilterns AONB, the funding would be administered through the Chilterns

Conservation Board. The more land the AONB covers, the more benefit this funding can deliver.

Overall, I believe there are more pros than cons, but most people probably won't really notice the difference day-to-day. And while there would be more attention to local design which will influence the look of their house extension or new garage, the obvious pay-off is that people will be living and working in a landscape that is set to remain picturesque.

**OCM: Under the Government's new 'Planning for the Future' proposals, the AONB would presumably be designated as a 'Protected Area' rather than a 'Growth' or 'Renewal' Area. Does this mean there will be very little, or no development permitted here in future?**

**MT:** I think the answer to that question is undoubtedly 'no'. That's certainly not the Government's intention in my view. But the Government hasn't yet articulated how development would actually happen in Protected Areas. In our response to the Government's consultation we asked for more detail, particularly around the key question of whether specific sites within the AONB will function, in effect, as mini-'Growth Areas' with outline approval for development that can't be contested.

But we do know the Government is looking to establish a rules-based planning system which could reduce the latitude developers currently have to gain planning permissions in protected areas by, for example, arguing that their developments help to meet national, rather than local, housing targets.

**OCM: And finally, what is your favourite part of the Chilterns?**

**MT:** At the risk of sounding parochial, I'd recommend my local area – Princes Risborough. The scarp environment is wonderful, and I can see Whiteleaf Cross from my back garden. It's a lovely area for walks, with lots of interesting pre-history and wildlife.

**OCM: Thanks for talking to us Matt.**

**MT:** You're welcome.

# GUIDED HISTORY & HERITAGE WALKS IN AMERSHAM

LOCAL STORIES AT THE AMERSHAM MUSEUM



Over the last 18 months many of us have been walking well-loved routes in our local area, whilst others have discovered their local landscape for the first time. At Amersham Museum we have seen a renewed interest in our programme of heritage walks and have responded with the development of a series of new routes.

## DISCOVER THE STORIES OF AMERSHAM OLD TOWN

For many years we have welcomed visitors to Amersham old town on one of our guided walks. They take place weekly from April to October, on Sunday afternoons at 2.30pm. Our walks tell the stories of local people, local industry and notable events. Yet we also highlight small details that provide an insight into how life used to be in the town: a metal ring in the gutter on the High Street, used for tethering cattle, is one small clue that the nearby building was a butcher's with a slaughterhouse behind; dates on buildings tell us when they were built and the initials 'TD' reflect the dominance of the town's Lords of the Manor the Tyrwhitt-Drakes.

This year, with the support of the Rothschild Foundation, we have developed a broader story of the town and created two separate Old Amersham walks. We are now delighted to be offering the 'Early Development of Amersham Old Town' and the 'Expansion of Old Amersham' walks on alternate weekends for the rest of the year.

We tell the story of Amersham's long history of brewing in our town walks. Recent research into the town's most significant brewing family, the Wellers, prompted the development of another new walk, one guided and one self-guided. The guided walk will be launched this autumn and will tell the story of brewing and the growth of the Weller's estate from 1775, which resulted in the family owning over 130 pubs by the 20th century. The walk will also explore the family's global spread, including the connection with 'the Wellerman' sea shanty that went viral on social media in 2020.

## TUDOR AMERSHAM

Since the first community play about the story of Amersham's Lollard martyrs in 2001, we have been offering monthly walks about life in Tudor Amersham. Costumed guides lead visitors

around Amersham old town, up through the fields to the martyrs memorial and back to the town. Our knowledgeable guides share stories about all aspects of life in early 16th century Amersham, including food, clothing, medicine and faith. The walks take place at 2.30pm on the last Saturday of the month April to September.

## AMERSHAM'S 20TH CENTURY ARCHITECTURE

Our walks programme explores more recent history too. Our programme of architectural walks is focused on Amersham-on-the-Hill, with a particular focus on Arts & Crafts architecture and the work of J H Kennard. This year, with the support of the Rothschild Foundation, we will launch a new walk which showcases Modernist architecture – including contemporary houses which draw on its principles – in the local area.

## WALKING THE DROVERS ROUTES

One of our volunteers used time at home during lockdown to trace historic walking routes. He has researched long distance drovers' routes through our local area, where drovers took cattle to the London market and short distance routes where farmers took their cattle to and from the common. The result is a guided walk and a longer self-guided walk which follow these paths.

## BE YOUR OWN GUIDE

The self-guided drovers walk is one of three developed with the support of the Rothschild Foundation this year. We asked our volunteers to share walks they knew or suggest part of their local area that they would like to explore. The result is three walks, in three self-guided leaflets, that visitors can follow: the Chess Valley; Station to Station from Chalfont & Latimer station to Amersham station; and the drovers routes. The leaflets will be launched this autumn and we have plans for more to follow.





### BOOKING

More information about all our walks, including dates, can be found on our website. PDF versions of the self-guided walks will be available online for download.

We recommend that you book ahead for our guided walks. Tickets are £5 per person and children can attend for free.

We welcome group bookings for all walks and they can be arranged at a date and time to suit the group. Group booking fees are £7 per person with a minimum charge of £70.

Contact [info@amershammuseum.org](mailto:info@amershammuseum.org) for more information  
<https://amershammuseum.org/events/guided-walks/>

## Hypnos celebrated for its comfort with integrity, with environmental award

Luxury British bed manufacturer Hypnos is renowned for crafting sustainably made beds and mattresses and has been on a pioneering sustainability journey for the past decade, becoming the first carbon neutral bedmaker in the world.

Hypnos' contribution to carbon neutrality and environmentally-friendly product design was recently recognised with a prestigious 'The Planet Mark – Carbon Neutral Certification' acknowledging the company's relentless dedication to creating products that are as comfortable and stylish as they are sustainable.

Integrating its sustainable credentials into every aspect of its bed-making process, Hypnos' packaging is now made with sugarcane, another industry first.

All Hypnos mattresses, made from low carbon, traceable materials such as wool from Red Tractor assured farms, can be found in their Princes Risborough showroom.

For more information visit:  
<https://www.hypnosbeds.com>



# Inspired by nature

**Hypnos, a local award-winning bed manufacturer, has been handcrafting bespoke, made-to-measure mattresses and beds in Buckinghamshire for over 100 years, combining traditional skills with constant innovation.**

Every bed produced is created from the finest, natural and sustainable materials and is 100% recyclable at the end of its life. These quality beds come with a 10 year guarantee and a royal seal of approval from Her Majesty The Queen.

Hypnos' responsible approach is emphasised by being the world's first carbon neutral bed maker; achieving FSC® certified company status; complying with the ISO 14001 environmental management system and creating a lean and green manufacturing culture.



BY APPOINTMENT TO  
 HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN  
 BEDDING AND UPHOLSTERY  
 MANUFACTURERS  
 HYPNOS LIMITED ENGLAND

# HYPNOS®

THE MOST COMFORTABLE BEDS IN THE WORLD

Visit our Showroom: Longwick Road | Princes Risborough | Bucks HP27 9RS  
 T: 01844 348200 | [hypnosbeds.com](https://www.hypnosbeds.com)



Handmade in  
**Princes  
 Risborough**  
 with a **10 Year  
 Guarantee**

# NATURE'S RECOVERY

## FARMERS LEADING THE WAY IN THE CHILTERNNS

**CHILTERNNS**  
LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP



When we hear stories of our declining wildlife, the blame is often laid at the door of modern farming, which causes loss of habitat. In the Chilterns our farmers have been working hard over the last three years to turn this around with the support of our National Lottery Heritage funded, **Chalk, Cherries and Chairs** project. The results so far are fantastic and they've only just got started, with lots more to come in the next three years.

At the Gate Pub in Bryant's Bottom, you might come across a large group of farmers talking over a pie and pint. That's the Central Chilterns Farmer Cluster, who meet regularly there since being set up in Autumn 2018 by Ian Waller, who farms near Prestwood. The cluster has since grown to 18 members who collectively farm 6,500 hectares.

Over the last three years, Chilterns Conservation Board team members Nick Marriner and Harriet Bennett have been working with the cluster to support them with understanding the wildlife they have on their farms; accessing expert advice on how to look after it; and delivering joint projects across the whole cluster. The cluster was set up based on a bottom-up approach where farmers helped to shape and inform the support that they need. Farmers have been able to plan projects on their own farms too.

The cluster has done an impressive amount of work, with fantastic outcomes and improvements for the wildlife on their farms.



**"We're seeing loads of birds as well, such a good feeling. Also had neighbours and walkers along the footpath noticing a big difference on the farm"** ADAM PENNY



## HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS SO FAR:



### ACHIEVEMENTS IN NUMBERS

**Farmland wildlife surveys:** The cluster has carried out surveys of surveys of plants, birds, mammals and reptiles. Results include:

- 100 species of birds recorded across three years of winter and spring surveys. Corn bunting territories on five farms and yellowhammer on 16 farms.
- Winter bird ringing projects across five farms saw 19 corn bunting & 93 yellowhammer rung in the first winter.
- 407 hectares of full grassland botanical surveys took place across 18 farms and 286 species were recorded on one farm.
- 750 reptile refugia (objects such as mats and tins which are used as places for reptiles to take refuge) were donated by Atkins Global to support a farmland reptile survey. Grass snakes, slow worms and common lizards have all been recorded.



### JOINT PROJECTS ACROSS ALL 18 FARMS:

- 3.1 kilometres of new wildflower margins planted.
- 54 Owl boxes installed and monitored by volunteers from Bucks Owl & Raptor Group. Eight active Barn Owl nests in 2021 with 26 eggs in early monitoring visits.
- 320 new 'welcoming farmland' signs installed on all 18 farms.
- 23t of supplementary bird food and 54 feeders.
- With funding from the Rothschild Foundation, the cluster was able to set up an exciting new Farm Carbon Project. 18 Farm Carbon self-assessments are underway and soil samples have been taken from 36 fields across all of the farms.



### INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS ON FARMS IN NUMBERS:

- 4,250 metres of new hedgerow planted, 1,565 metres coppiced and 3,440 metres protected from livestock with new stock fencing.
- 4.4 hectares of new wildflower meadows created.
- 4.6 hectares of new winter wild bird feeding areas planted.
- 9 hectares of SSSI chalk grassland restored.



### EXPERT SUPPORT AND VOLUNTEER HELP:

- 51 volunteers have been supporting farmland wildlife surveys. Bird surveyors have walked over 175 miles, reptile surveyors are checking 320 mats & tins every month.
- 30 volunteers are working with Chiltern Rangers on practical farm work parties. Volunteers have planted 300 cowslips plants, spent 50 hours clearing grassland of Ragwort, planted 150m of hedgerow and planted 9 new fruit trees in a farm orchard.
- Bucks Owl & Raptor Group have spent over 50 days making, installing & checking owl boxes.
- Over 50 contractors, consultants and local volunteer interest groups are working directly with farmers on specific projects.

### EXPERT ADVICE FOR FARMERS:

18 Whole Farm Plans were commissioned and completed looking at full habitat creation and management options to support the design of new projects

Five whole farm hedgerow surveys took place and two SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) management plans were written, and three orchard management plans were produced. Pond management advice was given to two farms

Farmer Will Lee said, "Farming will change dramatically in the next couple of years, and I want to make sure we are well-placed to adapt. Getting a range of expertise and advice through the Cluster is really helping me understand what can be done and how it might work best for us, as well as our wildlife."



The Cluster's Chair, Ian Waller, is rightly proud of what's been achieved in just three years: "The cluster has helped us better

understand the wildlife on our farms and how we can help it to thrive; we have a support team we trust and the resources on offer are invaluable."

Ian also recognises that the cluster has a key role to play in the helping farmers weave their way through the next few years which will bring in significant changes "Knowing that Environmental Land Management is going to be introduced in the next few years, we wanted to make sure the cluster offered us a leg up, help us adapt to change and be comfortable with issues such as carbon sequestration and soil health. We want to this approach to put us at the forefront of conservation in the coming years and make the most of opportunities to do more."

Whilst much has been achieved there is still much more planned for the coming years and it's so exciting to see farmers taking the lead and driving nature's recovery in the Chilterns. If our birds, butterflies, and plants could read this we hope they would be excited!

Read the case study of the Central Chilterns Farmer Cluster here: [https://bit.ly/farmer\\_cluster](https://bit.ly/farmer_cluster)

# CHILTERN FESTIVALS & FOOD



Put a spring in your step with our year-round programme of events, guided walks and festivals introducing you to the landscapes, heritage, stories and the people of the Chilterns.

## LOOK OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING FLAGSHIP EVENTS:

### CHILTERN WALKING FESTIVALS

The Chilterns Walking Festivals take place in May and October each year, bringing you guided walks and outdoor events to suit all tastes, ages and abilities. Each festival offers around 80 walks taking place throughout the Chilterns over two weeks and includes:

- **Family Friendly:** From woodland adventures and bushcraft events to storytelling, treasure hunting, toddler toddles and nature-spotting walks – spend quality time with family and friends outdoors.
- **History & Heritage:** Discover more about our rich heritage and precious ancient landscapes. Join a costumed Tudor walk, explore Grims Ditch or see the World War One practice trenches. Or take in iron age hillforts, old drovers routes and holloways on your walk.
- **Learn and Do:** Master tree identification, practice map and compass navigation, or have a go at Nordic walking. There are lots of opportunities to get involved and try something new.
- **Nature walks:** Enjoy autumn colours on a woodland walk and listen out for deer rutting. Join an expert guide for fungi spotting or birdwatching.



### CELEBRATION OF CHILTERN FOOD & DRINK

Since medieval times the bountiful countryside of the Chilterns has been a source of timber, meat, dairy produce and watercress from the clear chalk streams. There are many orchards dotted around bearing fruit, including the popular 'Aylesbury prune'. Once the larder of London, the Chilterns still produces a great variety of high-quality food and drink.

This foodie celebration will take place from **24 – 31 October** with a range of family-friendly and community events, celebrating the region's food heritage, past and present. The festival will also showcase the region's impressive and ever-growing range of local food and drink producers, with guided walks and tours taking in vineyards, farm shops, cafes, pubs, breweries and restaurants.

#### The programme highlights will include:

- Join Chiltern Rangers on 18 October for a seed gathering walk along the River Wye
- Discover the magical world of mushrooms with a guided walk through Penn Wood
- Food & Drink walks sampling local specialities such as Nettlebed cheeses, Buckmoorend burgers and sparkling wine from the Radnage Valley
- Join local guides for a tour of the Inns of Amersham past and present, or a Bodgers pub tour
- Learn about the restoration of our Chilterns orchards, do some apple pressing and sample some fruity specialities.



### ARTS & CRAFTS OF THE CHILTERN

The Chilterns has been shaped by the arts and crafts people who have lived and worked here over the centuries. The beech woodlands made the Chilterns a centre of the furniture making industry in the 19th century and was once a thriving hub for straw plaiting, lace and hat making. The landscape still inspires artists and craftspeople who are producing beautiful work. Some of these will be taking part in our Festivals. Look out too for the Artweeks Festivals in 2022, a chance to meet

the artists and makers, often in their studios in beautiful locations. There are arts trails, demonstrations and taster sessions on offer.

- **Oxfordshire Artweeks 7-29 May**
- **Bucks Artweeks 11– 26 of June**
- **Hertfordshire Artweeks 3-11 September**



For further information on all these events see our website [www.chilternsaonb.org](http://www.chilternsaonb.org)





Enjoy a stunning wine-experience in Henley-on-Thames

**OAKEN GROVE VINEYARD**

Tranquil wine terrace

Tours & tastings

Events & weddings

[oakengrovevineyard.co.uk](http://oakengrovevineyard.co.uk)

Award Winning

**LACEYS FARM SHOP & BUTCHERS**

**From Our Farm To Your Fork**



Fully stocked farm shop specialising in produce from our farm, as well as other local farms and businesses.



**Laceys Farm Shop & Butchers**  
Lane End, Bucks HP14 3LP  
Telephone : 01494 881660  
[www.laceysfamilyfarm.co.uk](http://www.laceysfamilyfarm.co.uk)

**Opening Times**  
Tues - Fri 8.30am - 5 pm  
Sat 8.30am - 4pm  
Sun 9am - 2pm



The Chilterns is blessed with a huge variety of talented food and drink producers, and unique artisans and craftspeople. With a growing awareness of the importance of reducing food miles and being more sustainable, why not try out some of our wonderful local suppliers and producers?

Here is just a small selection of some of our favourites:

Kate and Ben of **PUDDINGSTONE DISTILLERY** use local botanicals to flavour their award-winning Campfire Gin, and have worked with the Herts wildlife trust to use invasive Himalayan Balsam flowers to flavour special gins – they donated to the trust from the products’ profits. Just outside Tring in Wilstone Green. Book distillery tours and wild gin tasting evenings. [www.puddingstonedistillery.com](http://www.puddingstonedistillery.com)

**PE MEAD FARM SHOP** near Wilstone produce Chiltern Cold Pressed Rape Seed oil, apple and pear juices and home reared lamb and beef. The shop champions other local producers, stocking fresh fruit and veg, free range eggs, locally sourced milk and fresh bread. Make a day of it, visit the tea room for lunch or cream tea. [www.pemeadandsons.co.uk](http://www.pemeadandsons.co.uk)

Family run **DAW’S HILL VINEYARD**, near Radnage, produces sparkling wines and cider, growing traditional champagne varieties, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier. A great place to see red kites, they offer tours, tastings and workshops. [www.dawshillvineyard.co.uk](http://www.dawshillvineyard.co.uk)

**THE NAG’S HEAD** in Great Missenden is a destination eatery, passionate about local produce, stocking beers from award winning local micro-breweries. [www.nagsheadbucks.com](http://www.nagsheadbucks.com)

BERKSHIRE ESTD 1957 ENGLAND

**COPAS**  
VERY VERY SPECIAL TURKEYS

*Delight everyone this Christmas*

“Absolutely delicious... a wonderful family meal”  
PRUE LEITH, CHEF & TV PRESENTER

[COPASTURKEYS.CO.UK](http://COPASTURKEYS.CO.UK) • 01628 499980



**The Lockdown Larder**

A family run farm shop at the foot of the Chiltern Hills.

Find us at Kingston Blount Farms, OX39 4SA.



[lockdownlarderkingstonblount@gmail.com](mailto:lockdownlarderkingstonblount@gmail.com)

[@KingstonBlountFarms](https://www.facebook.com/KingstonBlountFarms)

[@lockdownlarder\\_kingstonblount](https://www.instagram.com/lockdownlarder_kingstonblount)

# SAVE OUR STREAMS & PROTECT 'BRITAIN'S GREAT BARRIER REEF'

BY AFFINITY WATER

Some of the Chilterns' most beautiful natural icons are the subject of a major environmental protection campaign, thanks to a leading local water supplier. Affinity Water, which is the UK's largest water-only supplier and provides water to homes across the Chilterns area, has launched a landmark movement, urging the public to stop wasting water to protect the UK's chalk streams.

## WHAT IS A CHALK STREAM?

More endangered than both the Bengal tiger and black rhino, chalk streams, which have been coined 'Britain's Great Barrier Reef', are some of the UK's most beautiful rivers. Boasting pure, clear, water from underground springs, local rivers such as the Chess, the Wye and the Gade are home to many of these iconic national gems, which support a diverse range of plants and animals, such as the water vole and brown trout.

## WHY ARE THEY IN DANGER?

Chalk streams are at risk due to increased demand for water. The Chilterns has one of the highest rates of water use in the country – about 170 litres per person per day – 27 litres a day higher than the national average. With water use far outweighing rainfall here, typically, groundwater is abstracted from these endangered chalk streams. With a rising climate also meaning rivers and streams are also more vulnerable to drying out, such as during the drought of 2019 which saw 67% of chalk streams in the Chilterns running dry, the threat is clear.

Last year, Affinity Water announced it had stopped abstracting water from the Chess, having previously taken 6 million litres a day from the river via

two pumping stations at Chesham and Chartridge. This abstraction has now been halted and water for the region is being piped in from other areas of southern England, in efforts to save these endangered areas.

## THE SOS: SAVE OUR STREAMS CAMPAIGN

Affinity Water is calling on everyone to join these efforts and take action to save chalk streams from the brink by saving 21 million litres per day. This is the equivalent of 140 million cups of tea, 37 million pints of water, 262,500 baths of water and 8.4 Olympic swimming pools.

Members of the public are urged to join these efforts and take action now by visiting [SaveOurStreams.co.uk](http://SaveOurStreams.co.uk) where after answering a few questions about how they use water, can gain access to stats about how much water they use, free water-saving gadgets and tailored advice. More than 85,000 people have already signed up and accessed this free service. Jane Bellard, SOS Campaign Lead explains: "This is a significant milestone in our ambition to get as many Affinity Water customers as possible to join our movement and help Save Our Streams.



"The UK is home to 85% of the world's 260 chalk streams. We need to treasure our water now for the precious and important resource that it is. Saving water at home will not only help us do this, it will support our efforts towards a zero-carbon future."

**"We need to treasure our water now for the precious and important resource that it is."**

THE SOS

Save our Streams Campaign has also seen a giant working bath, 125 times the size of a regular bath, touring towns and cities this summer to highlight unsustainable water wastage.



Hot on the heels of **Chalk, Cherries and Chairs**, our £2.8 million Central Chilterns-focused National Lottery Heritage Fund project, comes a brand new project – *Chalkscapes* – which will focus on connecting the urban communities of Luton and Dunstable to our incredible North Chilterns landscape.



Connecting people with nature is critical if we want to encourage more people to get involved and take action for their local landscapes. Last March we received £232,600 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This summer our project team is excited to be back out there working with community partners to find out what people would like to do, and to plan some fantastic pilot projects.

The projects will aim to break down the barriers that some urban communities face to getting out into the countryside and engaging with nature.

### OUR NORTH CHILTERNES CHALKSCAPES

Chalkscapes focuses on the natural and cultural heritage of the chalk landscapes in and around Luton and Dunstable. The project covers a total area of 172 km<sup>2</sup>, including the northern section of the Chilterns escarpment and the Icknield Way corridor, down to Ivinghoe Beacon in the west.

The chalk geology, landscape and associated wildlife of this area are globally rare. The North Chilterns boasts significant concentrations of chalk downland, intermingled with other chalk-influenced habitats, including arable farmland, scrub, woodland, chalk streams and springs. The area is home to a stunning diversity of chalk specialist plant and animal species, combined with a rich archaeological heritage and ancient monuments.

### DUNSTABLE AND LUTON



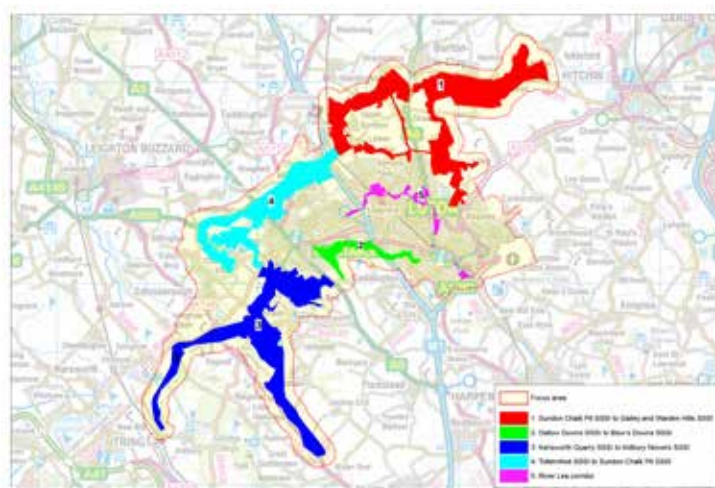
This landscape encircles some of the most densely populated, diverse and urban communities in the country. Dunstable and Luton have some of the finest

national landscapes, green spaces and historic sites on their doorstep, but it's a fast-growing population facing social, health and economic challenges. Levels of engagement with heritage and physical activity are amongst the lowest in the country.

Barriers to visiting the countryside from urban areas can include cost and lack of transport. DEFRA's recent diversity review showed that people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds can feel a fear of discrimination or worry they'll feel conspicuous in the countryside – despite valuing the idea of countryside life and the slower pace of life and health and wellbeing benefits of getting outdoors.

The first phase of our project will see new partnerships between community groups and environmental organisations, who will work together to plan activities that are meaningful to everyone involved. Pilot projects so far include the *Magic Path* project which will create walking groups linked with the Muslim Eid festival; Luton-based artist Sophie Gresswell will lead a community art project at Stockwood Discovery Centre, and opportunities for young people from urban areas to take part in conservation volunteering, physical activities and habitat mapping will be created.

We're testing what works for the communities involved and once we've evaluated the pilots, we'll be able to draw up new plans for a five-year project starting in March 2023, which we'll present to the Lottery funders for approval in November 2022. Watch this space!



Map 4: Chalkscapes - Focus Areas

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database rights 2018.

### HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

If you're interested in finding out more about Chalkscapes, we'd love to hear from you. Visit [www.chilternsaonb.org/projects/chalkscapes](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/projects/chalkscapes) or contact Inga Garriock [igarriock@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:igarriock@chilternsaonb.org) for more information.

The Chalkscapes Development Team are Development Manager Inga Garriock, and ecologist and Project Officer Luke Burgess.

# WHY IS GRAZING LIVESTOCK A CENTRAL PART OF NATURE CONSERVATION IN THE CHILTERNNS?



Restoring the range and abundance of wildlife that was once thriving in the Chilterns is one of the aims of the Chalk, Cherries & Chairs project. We are working with landowners to improve and increase wildlife habitat, and enabling and encouraging creation of wildlife habitat corridors between these sites. One of the important tools we use to improve habitat is reintroducing grazing in areas that have become dependent on interventions with mowers and chainsaws to maintain their wildlife value.

There has been a long tradition of grazing in the Chilterns that has resulted in the area being recognised as nationally important for grassland areas and their dependent species. There were, and still are, resident dairy and beef herds, flocks of sheep and assorted other grazing animals. In addition to this livestock, drovers used to herd cows and sheep onto high ground for grazing, either daily or seasonally, and animals would have been brought through the area on their way to markets. The result of this occasional, sometimes intense and varied grazing regime was a huge variety of patches of vegetation and the species dependent on them. Before fencing was introduced the patchiness produced by shepherding herds or flocks around was extremely good for biodiversity. Nowadays many of the higher and more inaccessible areas of grass have fallen out of use. This is partly because the ground is unsuitable for machinery (and therefore fertilisation), so 'unimproved' or semi-natural swards remain with a wide range of flowering plants, rather than a few species of grass, and this is less suitable for high-output commercial livestock breeds which have become popular for reasons of economy. Another reason is that fencing, and water supply is especially difficult and expensive to provide on remote and steep areas.

Without herbivores the habitat management of these valuable sites has been left to mowers, strimmers and chainsaws to mimic the suppression of plant growth that was carried

out by grazers. Livestock don't just limit the plant growth however, they produce all sorts of other benefits. They bring parasites such as ticks for birds to peck off, dung for beetles, the dominant grasses get eaten off and allow the less competitive species to thrive, they make muddy spots, short-grazed areas, flat areas where they lie down or roll, and the list goes on... All these little modifications to an otherwise homogeneous habitat creates so much opportunity for plants and animals that require different conditions to thrive. Ground-nesting birds such as snipe and lapwing need a variety of sward heights to rear their young. Trampling provides disturbed ground that acts as a nursery for seedlings and basking or hunting areas for reptiles and warmth-loving invertebrates. Dung hosts over 250 species of invertebrates, which in turn provide food for bats, badgers, birds and foxes. Livestock grazing is also better than mowing or cutting because it removes plant material more gradually and gives mobile species a better chance to move to other areas within the habitat. These effects are very hard to mimic with machines and, in the long-term, expensive and time-consuming to provide when cows or sheep do the job sustainably.





Not only does livestock grazing produce a rich and biodiverse habitat, but it maintains the lowest level of plant succession which, in the Chilterns, is chalk grassland. This is a valuable and rare habitat in itself, but also has the highest soil carbon of any UK habitat. Chalk grassland has a very important role to play in carbon sequestration and storage. When considering how to maintain grasslands it is also important to remember that grazed grassland sequesters even more carbon than mown grassland, due to the greater return of organic matter and nutrients. It is for these myriad reasons that supporting livestock farmers and enabling them to conserve and, where possible, extend their permanent pasture continues to be a focus of our work.

**CASE STUDY: CATTLE GRAZING AT LODGE HILL**

Lodge Hill is a SSSI on an isolated hill in the Risborough Gap of the Chilterns with the Ridgeway path running across it. It was historically grazed, and the swards are rare relics of ancient grassland that was once more widespread in the Chilterns. It hosts remnant populations of rarities such as glow-worms, frog orchid and yellow meadow-ants. The areas of juniper and dog-wood scrub are popular with migrating warblers and other birds, but efforts to control its spread into the valuable chalk grassland areas have had to be undertaken manually by volunteer groups since grazing was discontinued. The landowner has recently entered into a Countryside Stewardship agreement and, with support from the Chalk, Cherries & Chairs project, this has facilitated a mechanical scrub clearance operation, building of a livestock corral and reinstatement of the fencing and water supply. For the first time in decades a small herd of cattle was brought onto the hill in spring 2021 and they have been busy doing their munching, trampling and defecating.

We are very grateful to have a committed team of volunteers monitoring the site carefully for birds, butterflies, reptiles, amphibians and plants, and will watch with interest how the biodiversity develops over the next few years.



**Save Energy. Reduce Bills.**

**OxfordSolarPV**  
 01865 875555  
 SUNPOWER  
 Approved Installer  
 APPROVED CONTRACTOR  
 MCS + NECT

**Solar power. It still makes sense.**  
[www.oxfordsolarpv.co.uk](http://www.oxfordsolarpv.co.uk)



# MESSING ABOUT IN MARLOW

IMAGES & EDITORIAL BY MARY TEBJE

**The Thames borders the Chilterns to the south west and includes the magical villages of Goring & Streatley, busy market towns of Henley and Marlow and so much in between.**

Marlow grew around an important river crossing on the road from Reading to High Wycombe. River trade with London was important too, and boats and barges carried timber, firewood, flour, corn and malt to the city. Today's splendid suspension bridge was designed by William Tierney Clark in 1832. It was a prototype for and is famously twinned with the much larger Széchenyi Chain Bridge across the River Danube in Budapest.

Marlow's reputation as a popular resort has been well established amongst Edwardians and Victorians who left their mark on the town. The wide pedestrian-friendly high street of this well-heeled Chilterns town is usually festooned with bunting and flowers. There are plenty of independent shops and restaurants to tempt you to stop awhile. And shop awhile. The cosy pubs are along the river and down the pretty side streets amongst the brick cottages and churches.

The towpath and Thames Path National Trail shadow the River on the north bank, busy with strolling locals and long distance hikers. Kites drift overhead and summer swallows swoop and cry, some peeling off to take a sip from the Thames. Impressive balustrades mark the boundaries of enormous Edwardian waterside villas, their ornamental gardens reaching the riverbank.



## BISHAM ABBEY

Marlow is a sporting town, with an impressive sports complex surrounding the extant manorial buildings at Bisham Abbey. The manor house was built around 1260 as a community house for two Knights Templar. The subsequent substantial

rebuilding and alterations are evident in the rich variety of brickwork and masonry. In 1310 the building was used as a place of confinement for Queen Elizabeth of the Scots, wife of King Robert the Bruce. King Henry VIII granted the manor house to Anne of Cleves as part of her divorce settlement, and it was later bought by the Hoby family, who lived there until 1768.

## THE HAND OF ST JAMES

The Hand of Saint James the Apostle is a holy relic brought to England by Empress Matilda in the 12th century. Following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1539, monks hid the hand in an iron chest in the walls of Reading Abbey. It was dug up in 1786 and given to Reading Museum. In 1840, it was sold to J. Scott Murray, who put it in his private chapel at Danesfield House. The Hand ended up the care of St Peter's Church in 1882 and has remained there until now. This summer however, the well-travelled Hand has been returned to St James' Church in Reading Abbey Quarter to coincide with their renewed focus on ancient pilgrim routes and relics.



## THE QUEEN'S SWAN MARKER

The historic and quirky Swan Upping ceremony dates from the 12th century, when the Crown claimed ownership of all mute swans – a prized dish at banquets and feasts. Punishment for poaching Crown property was harsh, punishable by death by hanging. No longer eaten, today the Crown retains the right to ownership of all unmarked mute swans in open water, but The Queen only exercises her ownership on certain stretches of the Thames and its surrounding tributaries. This ownership is shared with the Worshipful Company of Vintners, one of the “Great Twelve” livery companies of London, and the Worshipful Company of Dyers, who were granted rights of ownership by the Crown in the fifteenth century. Once rounded up on the water, the birds are taken ashore to be weighed and measured to obtain estimates of growth rate and the birds are examined for any sign of injury caused by fishing hooks and line. [www.royalswan.co.uk](http://www.royalswan.co.uk) for dates and times.

## THINGS TO DO

- ✓ A good place to start is at Marlow Museum, a treasure trove of local stories and history of the town and surrounds. Free admission. [www.marlowmuseum.co.uk](http://www.marlowmuseum.co.uk)
- ✓ The Stanley Spencer Gallery is an art museum in nearby Cookham, dedicated to the life and work of the local artist Stanley Spencer. <https://stanleyspencer.org.uk>
- ✓ Brewing was a significant local industry, and much of this heritage can still be seen around town. It is also home to Rebellion Beer at the nearby Marlow Bottom. Opening times and tastings at [www.rebellionbeer.co.uk](http://www.rebellionbeer.co.uk)
- ✓ Marlow is perhaps best known for its rowing champions. Founded in 1871, Marlow Rowing Club it is one of the main rowing and sculling centres in England. The Club runs two regattas; Marlow Spring on the Early May Bank Holiday and Marlow Town, which has a starring role in the Marlow Town Regatta and Festival.
- ✓ It doesn't get more gothic than a tour with Mary Shelley, who tells the stories of some of Marlow's famous and infamous residents. 'Mary Does Marlow' walking tours can be booked at [marydoesmarlow.eventbrite.com](http://marydoesmarlow.eventbrite.com)
- ✓ Walk out from Jerome K Jerome's 'bustling, lively town' onto the banks of the Thames, past historic buildings and then into the 'lovely country round about', through woodlands and alongside ancient archaeological sites. Download the guide here: <https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1975/marlow.pdf>



## TAILORED HOME INSURANCE RIGHT DOWN TO THE FINEST DETAIL

A home is more than just bricks and mortar. That's why NFU Mutual Bespoke home insurance covers not only your home but also your beloved garden.

To discuss your high-value home insurance, contact Richard Ushiro-Lumb, from the Marlow agency on 01628 477311 or email [Marlow@nfumutual.co.uk](mailto:Marlow@nfumutual.co.uk)



**NFU Mutual**  
BESPOKE INSURANCE

J W Bloomer & H W R Langford is an appointed representative of The National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance Society Limited (No. 111982).

# FUNGI SPOTTING IN THE CHILTERN

BY LINDA SEWARD

I am an amateur mycologist. I only started studying fungi last autumn during the lockdown, but I am now completely hooked. Since October 2020 I have taken thousands of photographs of fungi in the Chilterns and spent countless hours studying my growing library of fungi books.

My fungal Damascene moment occurred last year when my husband pointed out a purple mushroom in our local woods while we were walking the dog. I literally couldn't believe my eyes that something so beautiful could exist on the forest floor and was even more thrilled to discover its amazing name: amethyst deceiver. What I find surprising is that I had never noticed it before. Well, now my eyes are truly open and the mushrooms on these pages are a tiny sample of what you can look forward to seeing if you open your eyes too.

Of course, I had seen fungi before. In fact, the waxcaps at the top of this page were growing in my own garden. But I had simply acknowledged their presence without taking much notice. Now I have found out how essential the "wood-wide web" is to the health of the natural world, and I've also realised how incredibly exciting it is to discover the fungi growing in our area.

We are very lucky in the Chilterns to have two excellent fungus groups that meet during the fungi season to "foray" for mushrooms to catalogue and identify them.

The Fungus Survey of Oxfordshire (FSO) is a group of volunteers who are interested in identifying and recording the fungi found in Oxfordshire. Mycology expert



Richard Fortey (who has been my guiding light for identifying many of the species I have found) is the president. A Chiltern resident, his book "The Wood for the Trees" is a must-read, and I also recommend his new book "A Curious Boy," especially the chapter on mushrooms. Here is the website for the FSO: <http://www.fungusoxfordshire.org.uk/index.html>

The Buckinghamshire Fungus Group was set up in 1998 to promote Fungus recording in that county. They conduct forays and record the results, and have an excellent page of members' finds which is constantly updated so you have an idea about what to look for when searching for fungi in Buckinghamshire. My thanks go to their Secretary Penny Cullington, who has been very helpful to me in identifying mushrooms. Here is their contact: <http://www.bucksfungusgroup.org.uk/index.html>

The British Mycological Society is a vast source of information, especially if you support them by becoming a member: <https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org>

This article celebrates the colours and textures of only 17 of the mushrooms found in the Chilterns. If you wish to see more, go to my website: <http://www.lindaseward.com> or follow me on Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/quiltmaniac1/>

One important caveat: there are some deadly poisonous fungi in the Chilterns that are quite common and have no known antidote. Never eat any fungus you find without showing it to an expert. My advice? Just don't pick them so others can enjoy them.



## TYPES OF FUNGI IN THE CHILTERN



**AMETHYST DECEIVER** (*Laccaria amethystina*) is a fairly small toadstool, glowing with bright purple colour when young. It provides food for the larvae of a number of fly species.



**BLUSHER** (*Amanita rubescens*) gets its common name from the way damaged parts or areas that have been nibbled by insects turn pink or reddish-pink.



**CANDLE SNUFF FUNGUS** (*Xylaria hypoxylon*) is very common in the Chilterns and grows in groups on dead wood, especially on rotting stumps of broadleaved trees. Its erect fruiting body can become flattened and branched like an antler, hence its other name of Stag's Horn.



**COMMON PUFFBALLS** (*Lycoperdon perlatum*) are mainly found in open woodland amongst leaf litter. Their distinctive texture is composed of small nodules covering the surface with pointed spikes. At maturity, a small hole opens at the top that releases clouds of spores when the puffball is compressed by a passing animal or raindrops.





**DECEIVERS** (*Laccaria laccata*) resemble many other small fungi and can be found in a medley of hues and colours—which is why they deceive so many people as to their identity. You will sometimes find brown, tan and almost white caps in the same area.



**FUNERAL BELL** (*Galerina marginata*) grows on fallen wood and contains deadly poisonous toxins that cause sickness and vomiting followed by liver damage and, if not treated promptly, death. Its small size belies the strength of its toxic nature.



**GOLDEN WAXCAP** (*Hygrocybe chlorophana*) favours untreated grassland, where it can be seen in large groups in autumn and early winter. Is commonly seen in large groups in autumn and early winter. The slimy golden yellow cap is domed at first, then the edges turn up, exposing the gills.



**HONEY FUNGUS** (*Armillaria mellea*) actively destroys living trees rather than breaking down dead wood. It produces tough fungal “roots” called bootlaces that spread through soil in search of fresh hosts. When the bootlaces meet the roots of a susceptible tree, they invade the root system and eventually kill the whole plant.



**JELLY EAR** (*Auricularia auricula-judae*) looks uncannily like a human ear as it droops off decaying and dying elder branches in damp, shady conditions. The outside is tan and velvety; the inside is shiny and wrinkled. Jelly Ears can freeze solidly and then thaw and continue to grow.



**OYSTER MUSHROOMS** (*Pleurotus ostreatus*) are quite common in the Chilterns. They are easy to recognise because the cap is oyster-shaped, the stem is off to one side (eccentric) and the gills run directly down the stem (decurrent). Oysters can be found alone or in overlapping clusters and vary greatly in colour.



**PARROT WAXCAP** (*Gliophorus psittacinus*) is a spectacular grassland mushroom that usually starts out a rich emerald green colour that changes as it ages. These fungi have a great mechanism for preventing themselves from being eaten: the caps are incredibly slimy.



**PORCELAIN FUNGUS** (*Mucidula mucida*) can be found on beech trees in autumn. Porcelain mushrooms are very slimy and the specific name, mucidula, refers to the layer of transparent mucus that covers the cap.



**PURPLE JELLY DISC** (*Ascocoryne sarcoides*) is also known as Purple Jelly Drops, aptly named though not very appetising. It has an unappealing gelatinous quality and undeniably resembles a brain. You'll find these bright purple clusters on cut stumps and logs all over the Chilterns



**SCARLET WAXCAP** (*Hygrocybe coccinea*) is a fairly rare mushroom that glows like a bright ruby in grassland. It particularly likes cut or grazed grass that has not been treated with fertiliser or pesticides.



**SNOWY WAXCAP** (*Hygrocybe virginea*) is common in the UK, mainly because it will tolerate moderate amounts of artificial fertilisers that would eradicate most other waxcaps. Lawns that are simply mown and the grass removed can expect to sprout Snowy Waxcaps within 5-10 years.



**SULPHUR TUFT** (*Hypholoma fasciculare*) is probably the most common poisonous mushroom you'll find in the woods. Although it looks and smells as a mushroom should, do not even think of eating this bitter tasting fungus—aside from unpleasant symptoms, it has been known to cause fatalities.



# RED KITES

## – A SUCCESS STORY?

Red kites are one of Britain’s most magnificent and distinctive birds of prey, with a reddish-brown body, angled wings, fanned forked tail and instantly recognisable mewing call. They used to breed across much of the UK, but persecution saw numbers fall and by the 1980s, the red kite was one of only three globally threatened species in the UK.

In July 1990 a project in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy Council (now Natural England) and the RSPB was set up to reintroduce red kites to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Since this reintroduction 30 years ago red kites have thrived in their natural habitat and numbers have dramatically increased.

**So yes, a success story, but why the question?**

Red kites are predominantly carrion feeders – they do an important job of helping to clear the countryside of dead animals (in modern times, often in the form of roadkill). However, this feeding habit meant that, from medieval to Victorian times, they were associated with open refuse tips and seen as unclean birds (looking back in history, human populations didn’t have the most hygienic reputation either!).



The graph above, taken from the BTO Breeding Survey report, shows the dramatic increase in the red kite population since their reintroduction in the 1990s.



Ever since their reintroduction, people have marvelled at kites circling overhead and a few have tempted them closer by feeding.

Although they are big birds, they weigh less than a bag of sugar and they are too weak footed to kill any prey much bigger than a small rabbit. Live prey is usually caught by surprise rather than speed. Though they can catch the occasional young bird and small mammal, slow moving invertebrates such as beetles and earthworms are easier for them to feed on.

Unfortunately, with their unwarranted unclean image and being seen feeding on dead lambs and pheasants, by the end of the 19th century, these magnificent birds had been persecuted to extinction in lowland Britain.

Are they once again being unfairly labelled with a bad image? Sadly, yes!



## FEEDING

Ever since their reintroduction, people have marvelled at kites circling overhead and a few have tempted them closer by feeding – sometimes with large quantities of food resulting in dramatic numbers sweeping to the ground. Whilst this can be an impressive spectacle, even one or two close up are a sight to see, there are very negative results. Concentrated numbers of kites, while being only a small threat to songbirds and ground nesting birds, are likely to discourage these birds from feeding and successfully bringing up their young.



Feeding discourages birds to expand their range looking for new breeding territories and sources of food as there is little incentive to disperse, so disrupting their natural population dynamics.

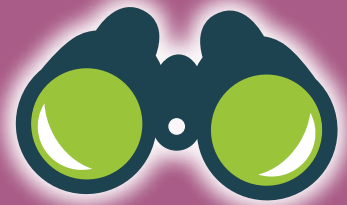
Also, the scraps they feed on will not present a balanced healthy diet for them and pieces of cooked and uncooked meat often dropped into neighbouring properties is both unpleasant and an environmental health risk, attracting rats and other vermin.

For these reasons, the Chilterns Conservation Board has always discouraged feeding. The birds can feed and thrive successfully in their natural habitat without our assistance. Since the country went into the first Covid lockdown, March 2020, we have had an increased number of calls, people genuinely concerned, fearful and even angry with feeding nearby, scraps dropping in their gardens (even on them!) and birds getting too close for comfort. Whilst we understand why people unable to enjoy their normal routines might start feeding kites, we strongly recommend that such feeding should be stopped immediately. If the perception that these birds are a public nuisance begins to grow and take hold, we are worried that persecution may once again follow.

Please don't feed red kites. Enjoy them while visiting their natural habitat in the beautiful landscape of the Chilterns.

# CHILTERNs

## YOUNG EXPLORERS



### Spot the Butterfly!

The Chilterns has lots of great places to spot butterflies in the summer. Many butterflies love to be around the wildflowers and special chalk grasslands in the Chilterns, or the woodlands. The best time to go butterfly spotting is between April and September on warm dry days.

Where to go to see butterflies:

- Hartslock Hill Nature Reserve
- Ivinghoe Beacon & Ashridge Estate (National Trust)
- Watlington Hill
- Bradenham Butterfly Trail (National Trust)
- Prestwood Local Nature Reserve

### A Cut-out-and-keep Chilterns Butterfly Spotting Guide:

You can cut out this guide and take it out with you. Don't worry if you find it hard to spot all of these or tell which is which – butterflies don't stay still for long! It's still amazing to see lots of butterflies fluttering above the wildflowers on a sunny day, and if you do spot some of these, you know you're a fantastic nature detective!

### DID YOU KNOW:

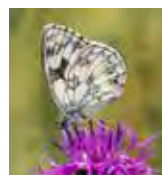
- Butterflies are insects.
- A butterfly's lifecycle has four parts: egg, larva (caterpillars), pupa (chrysalis) & butterfly.
- The UK has 59 species of butterflies.
- Butterflies have been around for 50 million years!
- Butterflies pollinate plants (just like bees do).
- If you see lots of butterflies and moths, it's a sign that our environment is healthy.
- 5 species of butterfly in the UK have sadly become extinct in the last 150 years. There are less butterflies than there used to be due to changing climate, and less of the right places for them to live.
- You can help look after butterflies by planting wildflowers in your garden or in pots, or by choosing butterfly-friendly bushes and plants.



#### CHALK HILL BLUE (MALE)

**LOOK FOR:** Light sky blue with thick black wing edges and white fringes. Its large wingspan is nearly 4cm.

**WHERE?** Chalk grasslands, sometimes visits gardens.



#### MARBLLED WHITE

**LOOK FOR:** Easy to spot because it doesn't look like many other butterflies! It loves purple flowers best, so look on thistle flowers or knapweed.

**WHERE?** Chalk grasslands.



#### PEACOCK

**LOOK FOR:** The only butterfly with big colourful eye spots

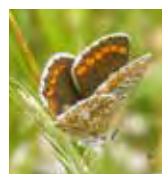
**WHERE?** A variety of habitats, in the Chilterns, or your garden.



#### RED ADMIRAL

**LOOK FOR:** A big bold dark butterfly with orange and white markings.

**WHERE?** Scrub, hedgerows, gardens.



#### BROWN ARGUS

**LOOK FOR:** Small and brown with orange lozenges on all its wing edges

**WHERE?** Chalk grasslands, woodland clearings, heathlands, sand dunes.



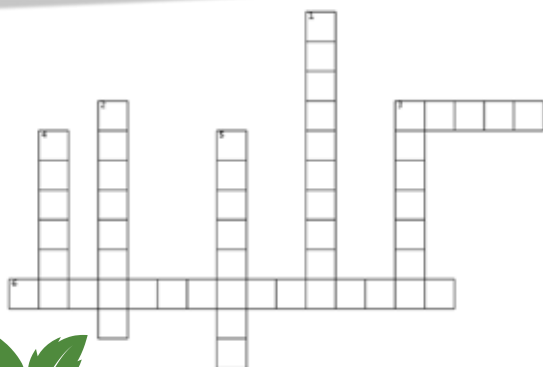
#### ADONIS BLUE (MALE)

**LOOK FOR:** Iridescent blue, with dark veins criss crossing its white fringe. Rare and hard to spot!

**WHERE?** Sunny chalk grassland

**FUN FACT:** This butterfly's caterpillars get on very well with ants! They rely on each other. The ants 'milk' the caterpillars so they can eat the nice sugary tasting ooze that comes from their pores! When the caterpillars form chrysalises, the ants take them into their underground nests and look after them until they hatch.

# CRISS-CROSS CHILTERN WILDLIFE PUZZLE



## ACROSS

3. A little bird with a red breast, often seen on Christmas cards. (5)
6. This bird's call is called a yaffle and it sounds like it's laughing at you! It chips away at tree trunks to make a hole to nest in. Its colour is blue + yellow. (5,10)

## DOWN

1. One of the UK's largest beetles, the fearsome looking male has 5 cm antler-like jaws which it uses to fight, like the male deer it's named after! (4,6)
2. An agile, grey tree-dwelling rodent with a bushy tail – loves to eat nuts and seeds. (7)
3. A magnificent reddish-brown bird, very common in the Chilterns, with a forked tail and a huge wing span of up to 1.8 metres! (3,4)
4. With a black and white nose, this large animal lives in underground tunnels and chambers called a sett. (6)
5. A nocturnal bird that lives in the woods, calling 'twit-twoo' or 'kewick'. It's name is an anagram of 'low t yawn' (5,3)

## All About Chalk Streams

Chalk Streams are a really rare habitat and are part of what makes the Chilterns special. There are only 260 chalk streams in the world and 85% are in England! Nine of these special rivers are in the Chiltern hills.

They are called chalk streams because they are fed by groundwater – water that has been stored in the chalk rock underground and rises as springs. They are amazing for wildlife and support a huge number of animals and plants.

If you go to visit one of these special rivers make sure you act like a true nature detective. Keep quiet, look carefully and you might spot birds like swan, heron and kingfisher. River mammals like water voles and otters can be tricky to spot so we often have

to look for clues like footprints, signs of feeding and even pool!

Under water there is a whole hidden world of invertebrates (sometimes called minibeasts). If you go stream dipping look out for mayfly nymphs, cased caddisfly larvae and shrimps. You may even catch small fish like minnows, sticklebacks or bullheads.

Your school or children's group could book a pond dipping session through the Chiltern's Chalk Stream Project! Contact Ceri – [cgroves@chilternsaonb.org](mailto:cgroves@chilternsaonb.org) for details.



## Focus on... Brown Trout

The brown trout is a freshwater fish that loves the cool, clean, well oxygenated water found in chalk streams. The gravel riverbed is the perfect place to lay its eggs. Some young explorers are taking part in the 'Trout in the Classroom' project to learn all about the brown trout lifecycle.



### TROUT FACTS. DID YOU KNOW:

- A trout can look out of both corners of each eye at the same time so it can see in almost every direction at once! This helps them to escape from predators
- Trout scales have growth rings, just like growth rings in a tree.
- The record for the biggest wild brown trout caught anywhere was 31kg - about the weight of an average year 5 pupil!

## Could you be our next Chilterns New Shoots?

This year 16 young people aged 15-20 from across the Chilterns took part in our first ever, free youth programme all about conservation: Chilterns New Shoots.

The programme includes a series of workshops, exciting field trips, and lots of opportunities to get out exploring and enjoying local wildlife.

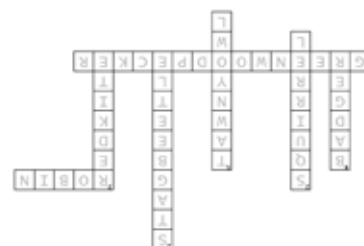
But this is about more than birdwatching for a yellowhammer or spotting bee orchids in the meadows. We want to give young people the skills and knowledge about conservation to consider careers working in that field, which is why we're teaching them about habitat

management, hedge laying, ancient woodlands and more.

You could join New Shoots for 2022-23! Do you dream of saving sea turtles or preventing rainforest deforestation? Start by learning conservation skills right here in the Chilterns. Register your interest at: [www.chilternsaonb.org/new-shoots](http://www.chilternsaonb.org/new-shoots)



## CRISS-CROSS ANSWERS



# More and more people in the Chilterns are recycling their food waste...



## Remember to recycle

- All unwanted food & plate scrapings
- Mouldy or out of date food
- Teabags & coffee grounds
- Pet food
- Meat & fish (including bones)
- Fruit & veg peelings



Please, don't put food packaging of any sort in the caddy

Don't have a kitchen caddy or outdoor food recycling bin?  
Order one at: [www.recycleforbuckinghamshire.co.uk](http://www.recycleforbuckinghamshire.co.uk)

 Buckinghamshire recycles

**Bekonscot**  
Model Village & Railway

Open 7 days a week until Sunday 12th December

10am—5.30pm

Heritage Festival Thursday 30th September 6pm—8pm

As part of the Chiltern Society Heritage Festival, this special event offers exclusive after-hours access to the village, talks about the history of Bekonscot and how our models are made, plus light refreshments and the opportunity to see the village lit up at dusk.

Bookings are via the Chiltern Society website: [www.chilternsociety.org.uk](http://www.chilternsociety.org.uk)



Winter Wonderland 1st—12th December

Bekonscot will be celebrating the festive season with specially decorated scenes around the model village, the snowflake train ride and Santa's grotto (weekends only).

Tickets must be booked in advance via our website

[www.bekonscot.co.uk](http://www.bekonscot.co.uk)



Bekonscot Model Village, Warwick Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks. HP9 2PL

01494 672919 [info@bekonscot.co.uk](mailto:info@bekonscot.co.uk)

## Martin Holman's Pest Control & Services



Qualified and insured  
with over 20 years  
experience.



Treatments and  
prevention for  
rodents and insects.



For domestic,  
commercial  
and contracts.


**M: 07510 290321**  
**T: 01296 622972**  
[ratman01@talktalk.net](mailto:ratman01@talktalk.net)  
[www.martinholmanspestcontrol.co.uk](http://www.martinholmanspestcontrol.co.uk)  
 @MHPEstControl


Estd. 1963

## Chesham Fencing Supplies Ltd

Manufacturers & Suppliers of Quality Fencing & Garden Buildings to the Trade & DIY


- Fence Panels & Posts
- Closeboard
- Trellis & Palisade
- Concrete Posts
- Entrance & Side Gates
- Decking & Sleepers
- Field Fencing
- Chainlink
- Sheds & Garden Buildings



01296 623139

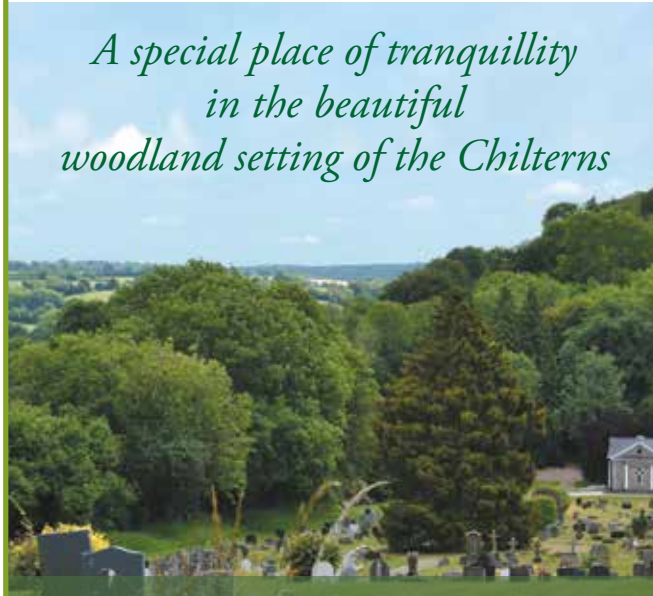
Astons Hill, Aston Clinton, HP23 6LD

[www.cheshamfencing.co.uk](http://www.cheshamfencing.co.uk)




**CHESHAM BOIS  
BURIAL GROUND**

A special place of tranquillity  
in the beautiful  
woodland setting of the Chilterns



### FORMAL AND NATURAL BURIALS

To discuss your burial requirements please contact us  
01494 432585 or email [clerk@cheshamboispc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@cheshamboispc.org.uk)  
[www.cheshamboispc.org.uk/services/burial-grounds/](http://www.cheshamboispc.org.uk/services/burial-grounds/)



Join Daws Hill Vineyard for a Tour  
and Tasting, Workshop or  
Experience

Visit [Dawshillvineyard.co.uk](http://Dawshillvineyard.co.uk) for  
more details

A family run vineyard in the  
Chilterns. Specialising in English  
Sparkling Wine



## Pipsticks WALKS

IT'S TIME TO MAKE YOUR SHOES HAPPY!  
Helping you discover the Chilterns & beyond  
[www.pipstickswalks.co.uk](http://www.pipstickswalks.co.uk)



PLEASE COME AND **VISIT** OUR

# BREWERY SHOP

AND NOW YOU CAN ALSO **ORDER ONLINE** AT OUR

# WEB SHOP

## TRING

BREWERY Co.



In 2021 our Monthly Specials  
are raising funds and awareness for  
Chilterns Dog Rescue Society.

Dunsley Farm, London Road, Tring HP23 6HA  
☎ 01442 890721 🌐 [www.tringbrewery.co.uk](http://www.tringbrewery.co.uk)

LEGENDARY BEER FROM HERTFORDSHIRE.

## A3A ENERGY

JOIN THE R-EV-OLUTION®



- Save money and add value to your home or destination by installing an electric vehicle chargepoint
- A3A Energy provides advisory, design, installation and aftercare for your EV charging needs to homes, businesses and destinations. We are an OZEV authorised installer and upto £350 grant available

T: 07368 699818  
 E: [sales@a3aenergy.co.uk](mailto:sales@a3aenergy.co.uk)





### PUDDINGSTONE DISTILLERY

THE GIN GUIDE, DISTILLERY OF THE YEAR 2021

Pop in for gin tasting on Fridays & Saturdays  
9.30am to 5.00pm, Tring, Herts HP23 4NT

Or shop online [puddingstonedistillery.com](http://puddingstonedistillery.com)



# THE PEACOCK

COUNTRY INN

**“Lovely Country Inn in the Chilterns”**

**Trip advisor Winner of Excellence for Seven Years**



## HERE FOR YOU

- Quintessential Country Inn in the Heart of the Chilterns
  - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
  - Contemporary Bedrooms
- Excellent pub restaurant serving home cooked food
- Close to M40, easily accessible from London & Oxford

## Daily Specials Menu

The Peacock Country Inn, Henton, Near Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX39 4AH

Tel: 01844 353519 Email: [escape@peacockcountryinn.co.uk](mailto:escape@peacockcountryinn.co.uk)

[www.peacockcountryinn.co.uk](http://www.peacockcountryinn.co.uk)

