



Newsletter



Rivelin Valley Conservation Group

Spring 2018 no 106

Through The Chair

Data Protection:

In May 2018, the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) come into effect. This will replace the 1998 Data Protection Act under which we currently operate. As a member of the RVCG, you can be assured we take data protection very seriously and take every practicable measure to ensure your information is safe and accurate at all times. We would never sell your data or share it with anyone outside the RVCG without your permission. The RVCG assumes that every member wishes to receive the Newsletter by post or hand delivery. If you gave us your email or contact number on the annual membership form, then we assume you agree to be contacted by either of these methods. Your data can be accessed or amended at any time by contacting the membership secretary, chairman or task team leader.

Throughout 2017 we have seen our membership grow to 266 households probably fuelled by the threat of the lime tree felling and the flood prevention proposals to construct a large embankment between the grade 2 listed Roscoe Bridge and the children's playground. But progress is often controversial, and we want to remain a strong voice; helping protect the Valley and its heritage for future generations and to help achieve an acceptable balance. Thank you for your continued support as we prepare to meet the new challenges ahead.

Graham Appleby
RVCG Chairman

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Task Team

Sunday 25th February 2018

Once again, the members of our Task Team turn out in force on what was a very pleasant but cold February morning.

The Willow tunnel was looking very sad for itself and after having years of being tied together from all different angles and having loads of dead wood in it, it was time to give it a really good cut back and to maybe change direction a little with it. Instead of being a Willow tunnel maybe we need to change things into a Willow walk as the Willow clearly doesn't like being bent over to form the tunnel shape.

We have planted 75 new whips into the structure and heavily cut back the top which was vastly overgrown. We will have to wait and see now until the summer months to decide where we go from here.

It is also very disappointing when we have to select three members of our team just to clear the rubbish from the car park that other people have dumped down the side, this includes around 12 tyres, a TV and a video recorder as well of bags of beads used in the growing of cannabis. If these items had been dumped in the car park it would still have been unacceptable but a lot easier to clean up, rather than having to put

people at risk bringing it up from the riverside. Well done to everyone this morning and welcome to the new members.

On our last Task Day the 25th February 2018 four new members filled in application forms to join the group. One young couple filled in one each and paid us. Unfortunately, in the confusion of packing everything away, these forms managed to get lost. We have the money just not your names and contact details. Every one of our 500 members is valued by us and we are sorry for this loss. If you filled in a form at Rails Road on this date, please contact me on kdall@supanet.com

Sunday 25th March 2018

With being busy at work I hadn't managed to arrange anything for this Task day so after meeting up at Rails Road we headed for the top path from the road down to the Footbridge at Frank wheel, armed with cutting tools and shovels.

Whilst this path is very muddy at the moment we didn't find much to cut back so a small group stayed with Graham and cleared the top end of Black Brook of all the winter debris.

I took the second larger group down to Wolf wheel where we opened up the view down the river from the new bench we have put in. Slowly working our way back to Rails Road it is amazing how many small jobs you find to do.

It is good to have days like today as all the smaller jobs that don't warrant a full Task Day get done and we still managed to go home as if we had achieved something.

Keith Kendall

Would you like to join the Task Team? Please contact Keith. See contacts list.

It has been found that people who volunteer for wildlife projects have a boost to their mental health, discovered in a wildlife project from the University of Essex. One volunteer said he felt born again and another said he no longer felt like living under a duvet all day. This is all the more reason to join Keith's merry band of workers.

More Tree News

Sheffield's tree chopping trouble goes on. On the 21st March a protester was blowing a red plastic trumpet. The Police Officer walked away and she tooted again so he arrested her. She asked which law she was breaking by tooting the trumpet but the officer put her in the back of a van!

Donations

This is a very long list. You are making the Roes work very hard!

Many thanks to –Derry, Porter, Heane, Lawrence, Hague Woodhouse, Toplis, Boddington, Cooper, Drinkwater, Fletcher, Kershaw, Outwin, Kettleborough, Lee, Mansell, Robinson, Seaman, Ryan, Townsend, Trickey, Best, Bradshaw, Brazil, Dakin, Dickenson, Frith, Grace, Higbid, Hodgson, Grace, Kershaw, King, Lewis, Liddell, Mason, Moss, Ollin, Palmer, Poole, Thackery, White, Woollen, Wright, Hanson, Roe, Morton, Axelby, Finch, Hetherington, Large, Legg, Maddison, Parker, Rotchell, Simpkin, Smith, White, Aizelwood, Andrew, Betts, Daines, Emsley, Foster, Hammal, Piermatti, Purdy, Atter, Beardshaw, Cocker, Goulding, Helliwell, Isherwood, Jackman, Keen, Neil, Pawson, Roe, Saunders, Shail, Smith, Toplis, Buckland, Hill, Coombes, Harston, Rodley, Rybinsky, Whitel a poor artist, William Goodey, Bown, Clarke, Fish, Horsefield, Combear, Higginbottom, Kite, Moorhouse, Nutton, Candour, Bardmore, Sanderson. Cotton, Loasby, Bragg, Lampeter, Owen, Ginnis, Shaw, Bruce, Bennet, Gladwell, Morrell, Ward. All this amounts to an amazing £1,291. If your name is not here, it is because your contribution arrived after this newsletter went for printing.

Open Meetings

21st February 2018

Kerracher – A Scottish Garden

Peter and Trish Kohn

This garden was created by Peter and Trish. It was in a remote spot, 30 miles from Cape Wrath and difficult to get to but in beautiful surroundings, looking out across to the Outer Hebrides. To reach it was a long walk across difficult land or to go by sea. There was no road, mains electricity or telephone link. They transformed the site by hard work into a beautiful garden. The nearby Inverewe gardens were an inspiration to them. They had to dig drains and clear the ground to create their garden. They constructed a 52ft poly tunnel that had to be embedded in concrete and planted up the whole area with a wonderful collection of flowers and shrubs. The public enjoyed the easiest way to get there – by boat.

In 2010, they decided to leave and return to Sheffield. Sadly the new owners did not keep up the good work by Peter and Trish except for planting an apple orchard.

13th March 2018

Birds of Prey

John Kirkman

This talk gave us a run through of the many different kinds of birds of prey we can see in our gardens or countryside and here are just a few of the ones he mentioned.

Peregrine falcons soar high overhead and their good eyesight can make it easy to dive for their prey, perhaps a rabbit or wood pigeon.

Ospreys specialise in catching fish. They soar overhead searching for prey, then dives when it spots a target.

The hen harrier mostly found in the Highlands and islands slowly and silently glides until it spots its prey.

The Red Kite with its distinctive tail is on the up and can be seen here in Sheffield.

Many thanks to Mary Richards who has sent this article.

The Good Old Days

Things have certainly changed in Crosspool since my father was born in a tiny cottage in the middle of three attached to the Sportsman on Benty Lane. His cottage was a hive of industry as his mother was forced to take in washing from the hospital because her husband, who was a stonemason at Bell Hagg Quarry, died at only 39 and she had a family to support. However, they were never short of a tasty meal as there was an abundance of rabbits in the fields and the hedgerows had a bounty of blackberries, raspberries and new nuts and a trout could also be tickled out of the streams in Rivelin. All the children attended Miss Ellen Youle's Elementary School on Benty Lane, which is now a nursery. They were all very accomplished in the three R's and wrote in amazing copperplate handwriting

My father told me that the Hallam and Ecclesall Hunt met outside the Sportsman. Sam Ridge was the Landlord like his brother before him. They both held the title of Huntsman and Whipper In for the hunt. Sam would blow his hunting horn to gather the hounds who would often break their ropes and charge up the Back Lane in eagerness to join the hunt. The hounds lived at Cloughfields and the hunting territory which is now completely built up, was round Rivelin, Crosspool, Lodgemoor and away up over the moors. When the hunt was over, they would shout "Gou Oome" and the hounds would slip off to their quarters.

A second cousin of my father, Percy Allis was born at the top of Stephen Hill. He was one of the leading English golfers in the 1920's / 30's. When the house was demolished he moved to the cottages next to Hallam Football Club at Sandygate.

In his early days he played golf at Hallam Golf Club where my Dad used to Caddy for 6p a round. Percy was the father of Commentator and golfer Peter Alliss. The Allisses were the first father and son pair to play in the Ryder Cup.

My mother came from a large farming family who farmed for generations at the beautiful Mayfield and Rivelin valleys. She was born at Carsick Hill Farm, then moved down to Hagg Lane Farm which was situated on the right-hand side of Hagg Lane. (there are houses built there now). Finally, her family moved to Cloughfields Farm where she lived until she married. She could remember driving cows to pasture on Watt Lane and Dransfield Road. Her family delivered milk and potatoes to most of Crookes – no carbon footprint here as all the customers put out a jug for their milk and the jug if carefully used could last a lifetime. Milk was not the only thing she delivered – she was also called upon to deliver babies in the district as it cost half a crown, a fortune to poor families, to call out the doctor.

She remembers a poor artist, William Goodrich who lived at 13 Leamington Street, coming through her farmyard on the way to the Ruskin inspired artists' colony who were based at Rivelin Mill Cottage. He would paint a picture for my grandfather for 6d plus a hot meal. I have a lovely picture of the farm on my wall at the moment. Other farmers in the valley also have artwork painted by him and other artists in the colony.

One of my mother's jobs in the springtime was to get the wheelbarrow and manhandle the sow into it; I guess with difficulty. She then made her way through the allotment gardens to Gosney's farm, which was on the end of Den Bank Drive, now demolished, where it was put in with their boar. She returned some weeks later and after a few months a beautiful litter of piglets came into the world.

My mother and father both knew a gentleman called Harry Green who lived in the Rivelin Mill. He had a patch over one eye and looked to me, as a child, very much like Hagrid in Harry Potter stories. He worked for Chestermans the rule, measuring tape and tool engineers. I am sure everyone can remember those wonderful large leather Chesterman tapes with their brass winding handle and spiked end to grip into wood. During the war the

Directorate of Hand Tools ordered that industrial plant engaged in war work, and which could not easily be replaced if destroyed by enemy action, must be dispersed to locations remote from possible areas of attack. The pantograph machines and the screw dividing machine were amongst those classed as being difficult to replace. A dispersal factory was established in the Rivelin Corn Mill. The mill was built around 1756, probably replacing one built by the Earls of Shrewsbury in 1600. The production of steel rules was moved to the Rivelin Works, and so great was the demand that for most of the war day and night shifts were worked. I knew of one or two ladies from Crosspool who worked at the mill.

Sadly, nearly all the old farms and Rivelin Mill have now been demolished. All our family farms have now gone and the ones that are left have become very expensive homes.

But I suppose this has been done in the name of progress – I am not so sure. But the one thing that remains a constant, due to the work of the Rivelin Valley Conservation Group is our wonderful Rivelin Valley. It only changes with the seasons, and we are so very lucky to have this on our doorstep. My father said as I travelled the world, "Take a look at our beautiful valley and you will never see anything better no matter how far you roam – and he was right.

Mary Richards

I am sure many of you have more stories about Rivelin and our area including Loxely. We would like to have them in this newsletter no matter how long or short. Please contact Margaret Sanderson – see contacts list.

In Search of the Lost

Just as the red squirrel is in decline, so is Mrs Tiggywinkle, Beatrice Potter's hedgehog. She obviously saw plenty. I hope that some of you might see one. Please remember to send any sightings to Joan.

Some plants are also in trouble affecting two thirds of our native wild flowering plants such as harebells. The cause is nitrogen pollution given off by traffic. Nitrogen has little effect on coarse plants such as nettles and hogweed.

Rivelin Water Treatment Works – Site Visit

The £25m water improvement scheme at the Rivelin Water Treatment Works has been described in recent newsletters. New buildings house the replacement water treatment process which entered supply in late December 2017 to replace the existing Sirofloc Plant.

The RVCG Committee were kindly invited by Yorkshire Water to visit the site on the 6th February 2018 to view the process upgrades and on-going site landscaping.



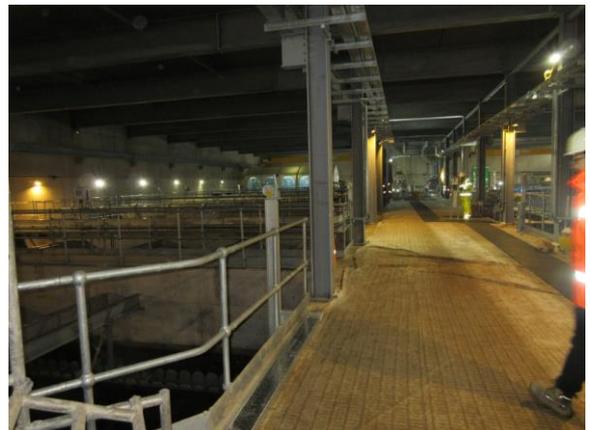
Site visit – new filter house in the background

Initially we were shown the extent of the earth backfill operations which will cover the new process building (sides and roof) with the exception of the South facing elevation (towards Lodge Moor) which will be left exposed for access to the building for operator access, chemical deliveries etc. This elevation will be timber clad similar to the new filter building.

The work is progressing well and the covering of the structure with earth is now virtually complete and the ventilators are now being installed on top of the roof.

We were advised that the cold weather is not a problem for moving the earth, but rain does slow down operations which should still be finished well before the contract end date of August 2018.

We entered the new process building through a doorway about to be blocked off prior to the earth moving operations burying this access! The process building houses the clarifiers, associated chemical dosing and control systems.



Clarifier Gallery

Six of the seven clarifiers are now in service treating water for supply with the last unit about to be filled with water and brought into use. We were able to view the pipework complex for water distribution within this clarifier together with the sludge draw-off cones. The 3 additional rapid gravity filters were also viewed in operation, these are housed in the new separate filter building, bringing the total number of first stage rapid gravity filters to 11, all of which are now in use.



Empty clarifier showing the low level inlet pipework and the high level draw-off troughs, together with the blue sludge cones to remove sludge from the sludge blanket.

This £25 million project has, under test conditions, already achieved the maximum designed output of 75 million litres /day (16.5 million gallons/day). The maximum output can only be achieved when sufficient raw water stocks are available and at the time of the visit the output was of the order of 50 ml/d (11 mg/d).



Part of the chemical dosing system

The party commented how quiet the process was and that it is difficult to imagine the volume of water flowing through the works. A period of testing will now take place before the new works are formally handed over to Yorkshire Water.

The committee would like to thank Simon Balding of Yorkshire Water for the invitation to view the site and for his time and that of Jason Corrigan of J.N.Bentley Ltd in showing us around and answering our questions.

We asked that the level of local interest in the project be communicated to Yorkshire Water in the hope that at an appropriate date some form of open day can be arranged.

David Lyon

David Lyon is the current RVCG Treasurer and a previous employee of Yorkshire Water where the Rivelin Water Treatment Works was one of the works within his responsibility. The RVCG committee would like to thank David for liaising with Yorkshire Water, for helping organise our visits and for keeping us all up to date by providing such detailed and interesting articles for this newsletter

THE RECORDER – Spring 2018

The Recorder

To-day, 1st April, it is a cold, wet day and feels nothing like Spring. Last year at this time I had mown the lawn and tidied the garden ready for the growing season. When the weather does warm up there will be many aching backs as people try to catch up with the gardening. We have had more snow this year than we have become used to, but, on the bright side, the children have been able to experience making snowmen, sledging and snowballing. Most of the daffodils on the verges survived being flattened by snow a couple of times and are bursting into colour. My small pond is bulging with frogspawn. I noticed the first sign of movement on the 10th March and, after much frenzied activity, the first spawn arrived on the 13th. There was still a lot of activity on the 16th and I counted at least 18 frogs thrashing about. On the 17th we woke up to more snow with a freezing wind. My pond was frozen over and covered in snow. By the 20th the snow was thawing quickly and I was amazed to see activity in the pond again on the 23rd. A lot of the spawn on the surface has died but, hopefully, some may have survived underneath, and the tadpoles will have plenty of food to eat. Newts will also take their fill of the spawn. Surprisingly cats, and probably foxes and badgers will eat spawn. A neighbour brought me a container with something to identify that she had found in the garage. It was a big clump of frogspawn. She has two cats and they have been very interested in the activity in the pond. The culprit was caught on my trail camera boldly striding across the lawn with a mouthful of spawn. Such is the way of nature.

In the previous episode of snow when the 'beast from the east' arrived at the end of February there was a flurry of birds in the garden. On the 2nd March I had 14 Blackbirds and 3 Fieldfares on the lawn at the same time for a short while. The Fieldfares soon took charge, as they did one day in January, and saw the Blackbirds off. They hung around for

three days feeding up for their journey back to Scandinavia. Many birds will have suffered in the cold weather. Owls will starve in a few days if their rodent prey is staying underground. Kingfishers are also at risk if their ponds are frozen. One in the Porter Valley has died. Please let me know if you see them, dead or alive. We have had a few sunny days in between the cold weather and on the 26th March I had six Honey Bees and two queen Bumble Bees on the winter heather. Please plant lots of flowers to attract the bees and hoverflies so you can all enjoy that gentle buzzing on a warm, sunny day. I hope warmer weather is on the way and you can all relax in your gardens, watch nature and feel the stress draining away. I would love to know how your garden is faring.

Thank you to the following for sending in their records:-

Sandra Barnett and Sarah, Tofts Lane, S6 – 12/2017 – Have Roe deer visiting the garden.

Helen Eyre – 7.2.18 – Hollins Bridge, Rivelin Valley – thrilled to see, for the first time, a male Goldcrest investigating the moss along the wall.

Neil Porter 7.2.18 – Pair of Goosanders on Wolf Wheel; 13.3.18 -2 pair Goosanders on Wolf Wheel, unfortunately being chased by a dog; 21.3.18 – 1 Curlew, field near Rails Road; 2 Buzzards mewing and circling over Tofts Lane. 28.3.18 – 1 lot of frogspawn in his pond; Chiffchaff, pair of Mandarin Duck and pair of Grey Wagtails on Wolf Wheel.

Colin Best also saw the 2 pairs of Goosanders on Wolf Wheel on 7.3.18.

Vivian Falshaw S10 – 9-13.2.18 – up to 6 Long-tailed Tits on fat balls in garden.

J & T Moss S10 – 21.2.18 – Flock of Goldfinch and Chaffinch feeding on sunflower hearts in garden. Initially attracted by teasels – an excellent plant to have to attract seed eating birds. Jackdaws on fatballs daily.

Hannah Isherwood S6 – returned home to find the dismembered corpse of a Woodpigeon on the lawn with the Sparrowhawk keeping watch from the nearby apple tree. It then collected the body to eat in next door's garden. (Probably was the larger female hawk as a pigeon is a very big bird to tackle).

Mary Brazil S10 – In garden – 1.2.18 Goldcrest; frequently seen – Thrush, Long-tailed Tits, 2 Wrens, 2 Goldfinch, 8 – 10 Sparrows, 3 Dunnocks, 6 Blackbirds. Julia Legg S6 – 1 – 2.3.18 – Fieldfare feeding in hedge at bottom of garden.

Sue Shaw S6 – 1.3.18 – 2 Grey Wagtails at Mousehole weir; in trees near Hollins Bridge – Goldcrest, Treecreeper, Song Thrush, Redwing, Long-tailed Tits, Great Tit; 7 Mallard, 2 Moorhens on river near café; several Mallard and the 2 hybrids on river near Havelock.

Chris Roe S10 – 2.3.18 – Saw a Fieldfare in garden for first time. 10.3.18 – 2 Goldfinch on niger seed and activity in pond; Blackbirds picking over the moss.

Kathleen Helliwell S6 – 3.3.18 – delighted to watch 5 Thrushes pulling up worms and hitting snails onto stones. Kathleen says 'We watched all day, such a joy as we rarely see any thrushes at all'.

Derek Hastings – 9.3.18 – saw 2 Lapwing circling and calling over the fields near Soughley Lane near Redmires lower reservoir, before heading south.

Pauline Higbid S10 – 3-5.3.18 – Fieldfare and Redwing; also regularly in her well stocked garden – Goldfinch, Blue, Great and Long-tailed Tits, Robins, Blackbirds, Pigeons, Crows, Rooks and Jackdaws. John & Leslie Moorhouse S10 – 1.3.18 – first sighting of a Fieldfare in garden; Treecreeper in mid-February; several sightings of a Great Spotted Woodpecker over the winter; also Goldfinches, Greenfinches and Siskins amongst the usual garden birds. This is good as Greenfinches and Siskins are not so common now.

Nick Duggan S6 – 19.3.18 – spotted a weasel along the river bank close to the footbridge near Hind Wheel pond.

Roger Kite S10 – 2.3.18 – 1 Field Fare in crab apple tree; 9.3.18 – 1st frog spotted in pond and 1st spawn 12.3.18; 27.3.18 – Starlings showing interest in nest box.

Graham Appleby S10 7.2.18 – 10 Fieldfares in Rowan in garden. Gillian Drinkwater – 11.3.18 – Great Spotted Woodpecker drumming in Rivelin Valley near Hagg Lane car park.

Mark Bateman S6 - 14.3.18 -1st Frogspawn in pond.

Joan Buckland S10 – 18.3.18 – only sighting of a Songthrush in garden; regularly – 1 pair Bullfinch, 1 pair Chaffinch, 1 pair Dunnock; 19-26.1.18 – Wren; 24.3.18 – male Greenfinch; 26.3.18 – 7 spot Ladybird; 13.3.18 – Magpies and Rooks collecting sticks; Coal Tit occasionally.

Joan Buckland
1.4.18

I was recently offered 20% discount on the RSPB website shop and decided to add a sparrow terrace to my collection. This has three individual compartments for the sparrows to nest and is extremely well made.



I also have a camera bird box which was occupied for the first-time last year and I wait anxiously for new signs of nesting. I have a selection of bird boxes since having my sparrow-proof uPVC soffits installed but still they somehow nest in there. Some habits are hard to change.

Graham Appleby