



National
Trust

Residents' newsletter
June-July 2021

Sherborne & Bibury

National Trust Images/Dougie Holden



The road to recovery

In the last newsletter I said how it felt that it was time for us to regroup and catch up.

This newsletter I think shows how hungry we have all been for the positive work and shows excellently some of the broad span of things taking place and about to happen.

It is such a joy that volunteers have been able to come back, we are so grateful for people's support and time in helping us to care for the estate. Thank you.

It is exciting too to be bringing forward work to finish the European funded path project and to get back to tackling the various estate repairs – such as restarting our rolling annual £50K investment in walling repairs.

We opened Lodge Park safely to booked visitors in the weekend 22/23 May and we are soon going to be vaccinating badgers (against TB rather than Covid!). Although nothing about ash dieback is particularly joyful, I am grateful for the speed that

the team have worked to get a hold of our knowledge and management of it and my apologies for any disruption while this vital work takes place.

I will finish quickly by saying just how lovely it has been for me personally to be able to spend more time in Sherborne again, it is clear nature is bursting out. Almost as if it has missed the attention.

Jonny Loose, General Manager – Cotswolds portfolio

Caring for Lodge Park

It's been over a year since Lodge Park was last open to visitors. However, Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 May marked the first of six exclusive weekends this year when the doors re-open for bespoke volunteer-led tours.

The next open weekend is 19 and 20 June with tours running each hour from 10am until 4pm. Don't forget though that you will need to book in advance to see this amazing property.

The conservation work still continues. The old blue wool dosimeters that record light levels have recently been replaced with bright blue new ones.

The strips of fabric are impregnated with a special dye that fades at a measureable rate, enabling us to calculate whether we are reaching our annual light level targets. The dosimeters are used in rooms that contain light sensitive objects such as paintings and upholstery.



National Trust/Christina Hanley

Newsletter goes digital

National Trust Images/Chris Lacey



We're playing our part in nature's recovery and have moved to an electronic circulation of the residents' newsletter.

With so much great work and lots of exciting projects happening on the estate, we don't want you to miss out on the latest news.

Signing up to receive our new e-newsletter is easy - simply drop us an email and we'll do the rest:

sherborneestate@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Improving access at Dover's Hill

National Trust/Martin Jones



Accessing Dover's Hill, near Chipping Campden has just got easier.

With the help of volunteers, the old kissing gate has been replaced with a fully accessible "Radar" one.

While remaining stock-proof, the new self-closing gate is

visitor-friendly and allows those with off-road buggies and a Radar key to pass through the gateway.

Accessibility is something we will be working on more at Sherborne too. The recent paths and tracks works are a great starting point in helping everyone feel welcome.



New tenant repair line launches

After months of development and testing, the National Trust's new tenant repair line has launched.

You can now call, email or submit your repair requests using the new online portal. All of these services replace any existing arrangements and are available 24 hours a day.

In the case of urgent repairs, (eg loss of power, heating, water etc) please report these by telephone so your case

can be prioritised and if needed, a visit from a contractor can be arranged.

Our telephone service is operated by a dedicated team of trained staff who have direct contact with our contractors, and if there is an emergency at your property, no matter the time of day, they will instruct a suitable contractor who will endeavour to call you direct, in advance of visiting you.

How to report repairs

Reporting repairs couldn't be easier. Simply;

- Call 0345 646 1311
- Use the online portal, Fixflow
<https://nationaltrust.fixflo.com>
- Email tenantrepairs@nationaltrust.org.uk

Clump Farm

There must have been millions of cowslips flowering at Clump Farm this spring.

In this small valley field the Cotswold Way crosses

National Trust land next to Broadway Tower.

Despite its size, it is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. In recent years the displays of limestone grassland flowers have just got better and better. This year has been the best yet!



Martin Jones, Area Ranger

Welcoming back our volunteers

It's been great to start welcoming back our volunteers and they've already been getting stuck in to some much needed woodland work.

Ash dieback has sadly killed many of the ash saplings we planted a few years ago. With the help of our volunteers, we've been re-using the tubex tree guards from the dead or dying saplings to protect young beech and sycamore trees instead.

Next on the list has been starting to clear the young laurel that has re-grown in parts of the estate's woodlands. This invasive species can blanket a woodland very quickly, so we have introduced a cutting regime to eradicate it, or at least slow the spread of it down.

My thanks goes to everyone who has kindly volunteered their time to help.



National Trust Images/ James Dobson

Spring in Littleworth Wood



National Trust/ Martin Jones

Late spring, just before the canopy of trees reduce the light on the woodland floor, is a magical time at Littleworth Wood near Broadway.

The tulip-like leaves of the meadow saffron make the most of the sun's rays before dying back. The flowers emerge in the autumn, hence its common name, the autumn crocus.

Herb Paris are also in full

flower. Numbers of this ancient woodland indicator species have dramatically increased since thinning and coppicing was re-introduced to the wood some years ago.

The summer visitors have returned too – blackcaps, chiffchaff and redstart have all been spotted.

Look out for black caps and chiffchaffs nesting at Sherborne too - especially in hedgerows and woodlands.

Cellar newts



National Trust Images/ James Dodson

While completing the daily building checks at Lodge Park, the team discovered some new visitors had made their way into the cellar.

How the smooth newts got there remains a mystery. Being creatures that prefer dark, damp habitats it's hardly surprising that they were tempted by the cool cellar.

Our Wildlife Advisor saved the day by carefully collecting them up and placing them under some vegetation next to the pool at the front of the grandstand building – a much better place for them to call home.



Update: paths and tracks work

This summer we will be finishing off the £165,000 project to improve the access paths around the estate.

We amended our planning consent which means we can now work through the summer when access is much easier. As we will not be cutting any vegetation and will be carrying out checks for birds before we start the improvements, the council's

Biodiversity Officer was happy to approve the work.

In Ragged Copse, we'll be rolling the upper section which will improve the surface. We will then move on to the Pleasure Ground. While work is carried out, some paths maybe closed so please follow the diversions.

We will also be installing new waymark and finger posts to make the routes clearer and

easier to follow.

It doesn't stop there. The Watermeadows car park at Northfield will also be getting a new Welcome & Orientation information board similar to the one at Ewe Pen car park.

Thank you in advance for your patience whilst this much-needed work is completed.

Eyes and ears

Thank you to everyone who regularly walks the estate and gets in touch about things that need repairing.

With your help we've been able to fix some of these quickly.

Not everything is a quick fix with some things requiring consents and financial planning. But we're making great progress.

Next on our list is a rebuild of a six metre section of the North Park wall which came down recently and five sections of the wall along

the A40 totalling 30 metres.

If you're out and about around the estate, please [drop us a note](#) if you spot anything that needs some attention.

We'd love to know what wildlife you've spotted along the way too.

Ash dieback work

You may have noticed dots appearing on ash trees around the estate. These are trees identified by the ranger team as being infected with ash dieback.

Ash dieback is caused by a fungus called *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. As ash trees succumb to the disease, they can drop limbs and branches, collapse or fall. Once a tree is infected the disease is usually fatal.

Our ash trees have been inspected using a rationale drawn up in collaboration with other agencies and organisations.

Before any works to remove infected trees can begin, they have to be approved by Forestry England.

On the estate, those trees in high-use areas (such as alongside roads, residential buildings or well-used paths) with a loss of 50% or more of the leaves in the crown, will be removed. This is the universally agreed benchmark.

Diseased trees which do not pose a risk to public safety will be left for nature to take its course. This will also allow natural processes to dictate and maintain the maximum level of biodiversity.



National Trust Images/ David Levenson

The disease has been so rampant that any trees on the estate that were likely to succumb will most likely already have done so.

Surviving ash trees may have some natural resistance and will, hopefully, provide disease-resistant progeny which will ensure their survival into the future.

The felling work will begin in July and into August. As a result, the following roads will be affected:

- A40 (lane closed for 2 days)
- Lodge Park road (closed for 2 weeks)
- Eastington road (closed for 3 days)
- Cat's Abbey road (closed for 2 days)

Further work will be carried out without road closures in the woodland belt opposite the school and war memorial, next to the sub-station on the Clapton road and along the Windrush road.

*Please note – not all the trees that have been marked are showing advanced signs of the disease and so will not be felled immediately.

There are also plenty of other trees around the estate which have been marked for different reasons so not all trees with marks on are to be removed.

Please do [get in touch](#) if you you'd like more information or if you'd like to know if a particular tree will be felled as part of the ash dieback work.

Badger vaccination project begins

National Trust Images/ Seth Jackson



The estate is part of a pioneering project to vaccinate its badger population.

Working in partnership with farmers and colleagues from our central Land and Nature Science team, the project will focus on areas where badger activity is prevalent.

Badgers can act as a wildlife host for *Mycobacterium bovis*, the bacterium which causes tuberculosis (TB) in cattle. Badger vaccination aims to reduce the transmission and spread of the disease in the badger population with the intention of reducing the risk of cattle contracting TB.

The vaccination project involves deploying traps near signs of badger activity. They are checked each morning with each captured badger vaccinated with BCG (the

same vaccine used in humans) and then temporarily marked before being released.

Trapping for vaccination takes place over ten days, once a year at each sett or area and will cover a period of at least four years.

Vaccinating badgers with BCG is a licensed veterinary procedure supported by evidence that the vaccine is effective at reducing disease transmission in badgers.

Although vaccination does not cure animals of the disease, research has shown that it leads to a reduction in the likelihood of badgers showing signs of the disease, and a reduction in the rate of new infections in badgers and their unvaccinated cubs. These effects will essentially lower the 'R rate' in the badger population, leading to lower

levels of TB.

We cannot say for sure what effect the vaccination project will have on the incidence of TB in cattle, as complex large scientific trials have not yet taken place. However, if there is reduced TB in the local badger population then we can expect it to have a beneficial effect on TB in cattle. Being part of the project will help us learn and better understand this relationship.

The project provides us with an important opportunity to be part of a large piece of work aimed at reducing the incidence of bovine TB and its devastating impacts on livestock farmers.

We're very grateful to the estate's farmers for lending their support to this really worthwhile project.

Seasonal highlights

Swifts

June- July

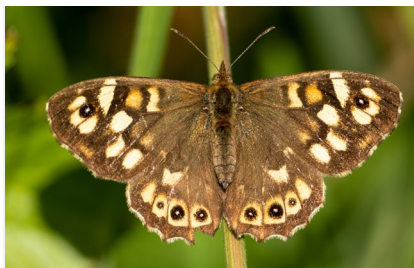
With their long, scythe-like wings and short forked tail, swifts can be spotted feeding high in the sky on summer insects.

Speckled wood butterfly

June- July

Look out for them in the dappled sunlight of the estate's hedgerows and along the woodland rides and edges.

National Trust Images/ Rob Coleman



Blackcap

June- July

As the name suggests, the male bird has a distinctive black cap, and can be seen feeding on insects throughout the summer. They nest in hedgerows and in brambles.

Chiffchaff

June- July

Found in the estate's woodlands, listen out for it singing its name out loud "chiff chaff chiff chaff".

National Trust Images/ Dougie Holden



Barn owl

June- July

With its distinctive heart-shaped face and ghostly silent flight, it's easy to identify. Look out for one flying low over the fields and hedgerows at dawn and dusk.

Bats

June- July

Bats love the summer evenings. Head out at dusk and spot them fluttering around catching insects.

National Trust Images/ Chris Darnant



Yellowhammer

June- July

Spot this bright yellow farmland bird singing from the top of a bush or fence along the woodland edges, hedgerows and farmland.

Dragonflies

June- July

With a top speed of 30mph, dragonflies are one of the fastest insects in the UK. They're fearsome predators of flying insects like gnats and mosquitos.

National Trust Images/ Rob Coleman



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