



All smiles in Wittering for a day of tree planting – all part of nature recovery

## What's been happening this Winter/Spring?

Despite the very wet, and at times cold Winter and early Spring, the Project has been gathering apace with much work going on behind the scenes (dry, warm inside work!), as well as plenty of opportunity to put on the wellies and waterproofs and get outside into the mosaic of habitats that make up the delights of Rockingham Forest. Sophie, the Project Officer offers up some highlights –

**TREES TREES TREES** – This Winter has seen tree planting galore, as local residents, council staff, children and businesses braved the weather to plant trees in local parishes, Corby and beyond. A particular highlight was the planting of a micro wood along Dunnock Road in Corby where 760 trees were planted by local children and the Scouts, fueled by free pizza! This day also gave Sophie an opportunity to run a forest school session alongside the tree planting, where the kids got an opportunity to use bow saws and palm drills! All of this and more are helping to build the evolving landscape of the Rockingham Forest – for more details of what is happening on the ground please click the link to the RFV website – [ON THE GROUND](#)

**RIVER WARDENS** – Katie Field from the East Mercia Trust has now trained a total of 32 river wardens in the Rockingham Forest. This vital training means that our local rivers, streams, brooks will have regular surveys carried out and this data will be used both locally and nationally to help support the health of our water courses. The latest training took place in Barnwell Country Park when five new volunteers signed up to be river wardens.

In addition, the Project in conjunction with the Freshwater Biological Association, ran a training day at Fineshade Wood on discovering priority habitats. The day was fun, informative and an opportunity to be a Citizen Scientist. For more information on our river warden work please click on the link to the RFV website- [river wardens](#)

**TREE WARDENS** – Last month saw the relaunch of the Tree Warden scheme at East Carlton Country Park with plenty of enthusiastic volunteers turning up to become our local tree champions. Training will continue in May and June and the good news is it's not too late to join the team. For more information on becoming a tree warden please click the link to the RFV website – [tree wardens](#)



the council Tree wardens championing local trees

## Community Grant Scheme update

This Winter our grantees have started to use their funding to implement their projects on the ground.

Here we highlight the Gretton project – the regeneration of Pick's Park – a previously little used green space in the village.

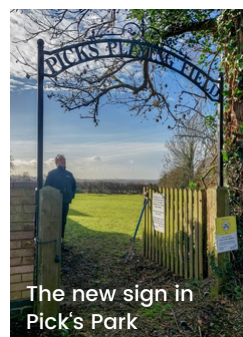
With the grant money the park now has a beautifully laid living hedge, a new entrance sign, six fruit trees – apple, pear, cherry and plum. These trees were planted by the local primary school, who has taken responsibility for looking after these trees as part of their Forest School sessions that take place in the park.

Currently the primary school are working on building a dead hedge and hedgehog hotel in their weekly sessions in the park.

**Councillor Jacki Lilley – Chair of the Parish Council** says – “These changes to the park have offered a great opportunity for the village to use this space for the benefit of both the community and local wildlife.”



The new fruit trees in Pick's Park



The new sign in Pick's Park



Hedge laying in Pick's Park





## Highlights continued ...

**Forest School Leaders** - Our 8 trainees are putting the hours in to becoming a qualified Forest School Leader this Summer. Did you know it takes a minimum of 180 hours of training to become a Forest School Leader? This group of dedicated teaching assistants have really embraced the challenge taking on both academic study and practical skills development. This great bunch are now developing forest school sites on their school grounds and taking children out onto the woodlands of the Rockingham Forest. To find out more about the Forest school ethos and our trainees please click on the link to the RFV website - [Forest School](#) and read [Sami's blog](#)



Primroses in King's Wood



Bluebells in King's Wood



wood anemone in King's Wood

**GUIDED WALK** - Thanks to Katie King of the Wildlife Trust BCN for running a bluebell and birdsong walk in King's Wood, Corby. Eleven local people, Corby residents and from the surrounding villages turned out to enjoy the early morning delights of this ancient woodland. Nothing better than hearing the dawn chorus on a Spring morning!



Local landowner meeting - King's Cliffe

**LANDOWNER ENGAGEMENT** - In February of this year the Rockingham Forest Vision partnership teamed up with the Forestry Commission to host an event at King's Cliffe Active for local landowners. This was a great opportunity to let landowners know about the host of grants that are currently available under the various Environmental Land Management Schemes, Carbon Code and Biodiversity Net Gain! The event was well attended, aided by the offer of a free lunch. For further information on the grant schemes and who can help, please click on the link to the RFV website - [Landowner Grant Schemes](#)

Alongside this event, the RFV partnership has been talking to a host of landowners be they large estates, small landowners, quarry sites etc. about the opportunities for environmental improvement on unproductive land and how this supports the vision to reconnect the Rockingham Forest through a mosaic of habitats.

## PARISH/LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY

Work continues on the ground, with both parishes and friends groups, to help these communities develop a nature recovery plan for their area. Many of our groups are keen to establish community orchards, tree planting, wild flower areas and pollinator corridors to name but a few.

We are currently working with the parishes of Easton on the Hill, Gretton, Brigstock, Oundle, Cottingham, Wittering, Wansford, Wothorpe and the Friends' of the Corby Parks and Woodlands - including West Glebe Park, Coronation Park, King's Wood, Hazel and Thoroughsale woods and East Carlton Country Park. A big shout out to all those involved in this work!

As part of these plans, the RFV will this Summer be running stands at the parish fetes and fun days, where the community can find out about the Nature Recovery Plan for their area and take part in a bit of guerilla gardening and seed bomb making.

We look forward to seeing you at one of these events.

**Team Outing** - Corinne and Sophie enjoyed a recent trip up the A1 to Boothby Wildlands in Lincolnshire, a 617 hectare site that is one of the 22 first round ELMs Landscape Recovery pilots. It was fascinating to see this innovative business model being used for nature recovery. For more information please click on the link - [BOOTHBY WILDLANDS](#)



Sophie and Corinne at Boothby Wildlands





## Spring/Summer 2024 in the Rockingham Forest ... What's to look forward to and how to get involved?

### UP-COMING EVENTS

We have a fantastic Spring/Summer programme of events and courses for YOU .....

Fascinating Flies – Saturday 11th May 10.00 –16:00 at Ringhaw ,Old Sulehay Nature Reserve

Learn how to identify snail killing flies – no prior knowledge needed.

Butterfly Conservation field trip –Sunday 12th May 10:00-14:00

A walk to see how Winter conservation has helped Spring butterflies such as Skippers and Green Hairstreaks.

Charcoal making with an Exeter retort – Tuesday 14th and Wednesday 15th May, Rawhaw Wood, Pipewell

Learn how to load and light the retort and make high grade charcoal as well as enjoying a walk around this SSSI wood.

Woodland walk in Collyweston Great Wood – Wednesday 22nd May 10:00 –12:00

Come and join this warden led walk into this part of the Rockingham Forest that is not open to the public to learn about the trees, flowers and other wildlife that make this place special.

Guided walk around a working coppiced woodland –Wednesday 22nd May, Rawhaw Wood, Pipewell

Visit this very special woodland where the owners live and make a living by coppicing hazel.

Woodland Plants workshop – Sunday 2nd June, Ringhaw, Old Sulehay Nature Reserve 10:00 –16:00

Come and learn how to identify woodland plant species with a focus on those that indicate Ancient Woodland.

Introduction to Forestry courses –Thursday 6th June and Friday 19th July 9:30 –16:00, Ringhaw, Old Sulehay Nature Reserve

An introductory course to manage woodland for productivity, climate change, bio- diversity and recreation.

Grasses workshops –Sunday 9th June and Sunday 16th June, Ringhaw Wood, Old Sulehay Nature Reserve

Learn how to identify grasses through exploring their structure, flowers and more.

Butterfly Conservation field trip – Saturday 6th July 10:30-12:30, Fineshade Wood

Come and look for a wide range of woodland species including Purple Emperor.

Introductory course to the butterflies of Northamptonshire –Sunday July 14th , Ringhaw Wood, Old Sulehay Nature Reserve

No experience needed – just come and develop your butterfly identification skills and learn how you can help with surveys.

FREE FOREST FUN DAY Wednesday 28th August, Prior's Hall, Corby

One for the diary – this free event for all the family will take place in the green amphitheatre space and the gully. Come and join in all the free activities from bug hunting, gorilla gardening and more. More details soon.

MORE DETAILS AND HOW TO BOOK CAN BE FOUND ON THE ROCKINGHAM VISION WEBSITE. Booking is essential for many of these events. Click on the link to read more and book yourself a place – [Rockingham Forest Vision Events](#)

### STOP PRESS...CREATIVE COMPETITION – What does Rockingham Forest mean to you?

Opening soon a creative competition with the theme – What does Rockingham Forest mean to you? This competition will be open to anyone, all ages and abilities. We would love to see a wide range of creative styles – we're interested in seeing and hearing what Rockingham Forest inspires –whether you're a writer, painter, photographer, potter, carver, crafter, singer or any other creative field. More information following soon on our website. In the meantime why not get out into the Rockingham Forest to get some inspiration.

And finally ...

Thank you from all the Rockingham Forest Vision team for all of your on-going support to date.

Any questions or queries please get in contact with either Dr. Corinne Muir at [corinne@nenerivertrust.org](mailto:corinne@nenerivertrust.org) or Sophie van den Bergh at [sophie@nenerivertrust.org](mailto:sophie@nenerivertrust.org)

All the best from Sophie van den Bergh and the RFV Team.