



Explore Your Colne Valley Regional Park

FREE

DID YOU KNOW?

Within the Colne Valley Park there are...

- 200 kms of rivers and canals and more than 70 lakes
- 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and 19 Nature Reserves
- 8 country parks and large countryside 'gateways', 30 irreplaceable ancient woodlands and numerous other green spaces
- water voles, kingfishers, deer, bats and other endangered wildlife
- 18 circular walks to enjoy

Explore more on our website or follow us on social media as detailed below.



Winter walk, Langley Park.

WELCOME TO THE Colne Valley Park IN WINTER

The River Colne at Staines Moor.



Explore a Colne Valley gem – Staines Moor

Have you ever visited Staines Moor?

With its unique landscape, beautiful rivers, variety of birds and interesting views, this Site of Special Scientific Interest provides wonderful winter walks. We have a circular walk and more information available on our website under our "[Visit/Walks](#)" page.

We are delighted to be three years into our Heritage Lottery funded Landscape Partnership project and with the help of our partners we have been able to achieve a wide range of improvements for wildlife and local people.

So far, some of our key highlights amongst many others, include;

- 4,115 hours of volunteers' time to conserve and improve the Colne Valley.
- Installation of 100 signpost and information boards
- Introduction of three herds of cattle annually for conservation grazing
- 110 local people volunteering as River Rangers
- 21 angling clubs engaged in planning for fisheries and nature conservation
- 34 people trained to check for signs of water voles, with 41 kilometres of riverbanks surveyed
- 326 events to bring people closer to nature

To learn more about our projects, head to our website, under "[what we do](#)".

Our other work focuses on protecting the Park against a wide range of threats (see Page 4), managing irreplaceable ancient woodlands, running an extensive programme to protect and improve our many rivers, applying for practical improvement grants (for example our 'Green Team – see Page 2) and working with local authorities and landowners to raise the profile of the Colne Valley Regional Park.

We do hope you have noticed some of our work whilst you have spent time in the Regional Park and that our website, events, and social media updates have helped you to connect more with your local countryside. In 2022 we would love to encourage you to explore more of the countryside on your doorstep.

Your support in helping us to achieve these things is a key part of our success, and we are very grateful for any help, whether it be through giving your time, a donation or becoming a member (become a "Friend" – see Page 4). However, much more support is still needed, so please read on to learn more about how you can get involved.



An endangered water vole.

Connecting with your Colne Valley

Did you know we run lots of events throughout the year? They are created for local people to enjoy and learn more about the countryside, wildlife, and heritage of the Colne Valley Park.

Our events include children's activities, conservation volunteering sessions, guided walks, online talks, seasonal trails for all ages and an annual summer festival. Fiona Brewer is

our events project manager, and she tells us more about why they are popular: "Many people are really appreciating nature, and our activities are a great way for them to do this. Whether people want some outdoor exercise to boost their well-being or just a chance to explore and appreciate their countryside more, we can help. Lots of people tell us they are surprised to learn how much the Park has to offer and that their favourite lake or walk is actually part of the Colne Valley. It is a precious landscape that is increasingly under threat, and we want to introduce as many people as possible to its delights so that they can help us protect it for future generations to enjoy."

This season we will be sharing a winter



Fiona leading a guided walk near Denham.

family trail and children's activity sheets, amongst other events. Learn more on our website under "[Visit/Walks](#)" or follow us on our social media pages, all detailed below.



Local children learning about river wildlife at Harmondsworth Moor

HELPING PEOPLE TO EXPLORE THEIR LOCAL COUNTRYSIDE

One of our key aims is to help people discover and enjoy more of their local countryside and green spaces. Improving access to the Colne Valley Park has been an important part of our Lottery Landscape Partnership programme.

We have done a lot of work over the last three years, and we hope these changes have helped you to explore. These include;

- Improving ways into green spaces with new signposts.
- Providing information about sites, local wildlife and a map, with new interpretation boards.
- Upgrading access, with new footpaths, gates, boardwalks, fencing, hedging and tree planting.

With funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and others, we have been able to focus on seven areas: Staines, Harefield, Ickenham, Denham, West Drayton, Yiewsley and Uxbridge.

Debbie Valman, our access and habitats manager tells us: *“Helping people access their local countryside means they are able to enjoy and see the value of it, as well as helping to care for the area. One great example of this is the path from Uxbridge to Denham Country Park under the A40, where we have improved the path itself, and Hillingdon Litter Pickers have done an amazing job in helping to clean up the area. Thank you to all the people who have helped – it is fantastic to see so many people making a difference and there are more improvements to follow”.*

We will soon be providing downloadable route leaflets on our website to help people make new discoveries in the countryside near where they live. Follow us on social media or check our website for updates.



Walking trail from Uxbridge to Denham under the A40

Before and after: the path under the A40 Uxbridge (right) has been greatly improved.

The site (above) has been transformed with the help of local volunteers and Hillingdon Litter Pickers – thank you.



What's happening at Woodoaks Farm?

Safeguarding the future of our landscape is just as important as caring for it today, which is why Sally Findlay, the owner of Woodoaks farm in Maple Cross, decided to bequeath it to the Soil Association Land Trust.

The land will be converted to organic, prioritising ‘nature first’ farming techniques and restoring the biodiversity on the farm. The Soil Association has become the farm’s new green guardian, working in harmony with nature to keep it healthy and protecting the land for the future. The farm is a pretty patchwork of fields, old orchards and ancient woodlands, and dates back to Anglo Saxon times. It still provides food, space and footpaths in this beautiful piece of Colne Valley countryside.

On the farm today, as well as 300 acres of arable and pasture farmland you will also find The Teashack and The Creative Juices Brewing Company (a microbrewery).

A new mission

Woodoaks Farm is now on a new path – set to become a vibrant food and farming hub to reconnect people to the source of what they eat, and to Nature. Rose Lewis from the Soil



Rose Lewis from the Soil Association

Association says: “At Woodoaks Farm, we have the opportunity to create new ways for local residents to reconnect with their food systems. From visiting the farm to see how food is grown, to buying produce that is grown right here on their doorstep, residents will be able to make more informed choices that are better for the planet.”

How is the Colne Valley Park is Supporting this Venture?

We have been delighted to support the farm and enhance some of its areas for local people by;

- Improving views of the landscape across the farm
- Putting in trail posts and creating and improving new trails
- Providing advice to help the farm acquire funding for chalk grassland restoration hedgerow planting and restoring the medieval barn on the site
- Supporting farm events by organising and leading children’s activities.

Read more about the farm on our website under “News”.



CONSERVATION ACTION The Colne Valley Green Team

Thanks to funding from the government’s Green Recovery Challenge Fund, our Green Team has been a fantastic addition this year, completing a variety of projects to improve local green spaces. The team consists of young residents employed and trained in conservation, gaining qualifications and valuable experience toward their future careers. Their projects include improving public footpaths and fencing, river habitats and green areas. Two of their bigger tasks included constructing hedges from cut branches at Ruislip woods and restoring and creating Heathland at Black Park

Luke Meagher, our Green Team Supervisor, says: *“The training programme is an excellent opportunity for young people to work outdoors, help the environment and gain the skills and attitude needed to be successful for a future job. It has been really rewarding to see many of the team grow in confidence and do such a great job of helping the Colne Valley to stay in good condition for the public and wildlife to enjoy.”*

If you would like to find more about this project, go to <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/project/green-teams/>



Luke Meagher – Green Team Supervisor

Helping rivers, one stretch at a time

Caring for the rivers within the Park is an essential part of the work we do, they breathe life and harmony into the region for so much wildlife and local people.

Since the beginning of 2019, thanks to our fantastic River Rangers team of more than 100 volunteers, we have made some key achievements to protect and improve the health of local rivers.

Highlights include:

- 31 volunteers completed river fly surveys to monitor the health of rivers, with the addition of eight new monitoring sites
- 62 educational workshops
- Volunteers donating 2,100 hours of their time
- 48 volunteer practical sessions to help improve river biodiversity, including non-native invasive species management for more than 10,650 metres of river

We have also highlighted the widespread environmental damage caused by Non-Native Invasive Species, and have run events to help tackle some of the problems. Josh Bowes has joined us as our new rivers manager, taking over from Chloe Crompton. He first started with us as a River Ranger volunteer. He says: "I'm very



Some of our river ranger volunteers beside the River Colne, near Uxbridge

excited to start this role and to help protect the area where I have grown up. There is a lot still to be done and it will be great to continue all the fantastic work done so far, to really help make a difference"

If you are interested in conservation and helping local rivers, then please become a River Ranger via our website 'work with us' page.

You can also get involved with our 'Outfall Safari' project happening in early 2022, helping us to monitor pollution that is entering local rivers. For more information follow us on our social media or check our website event pages.



Josh Bowes - River Project Manager



A team from Mace Group hard at work in the park.

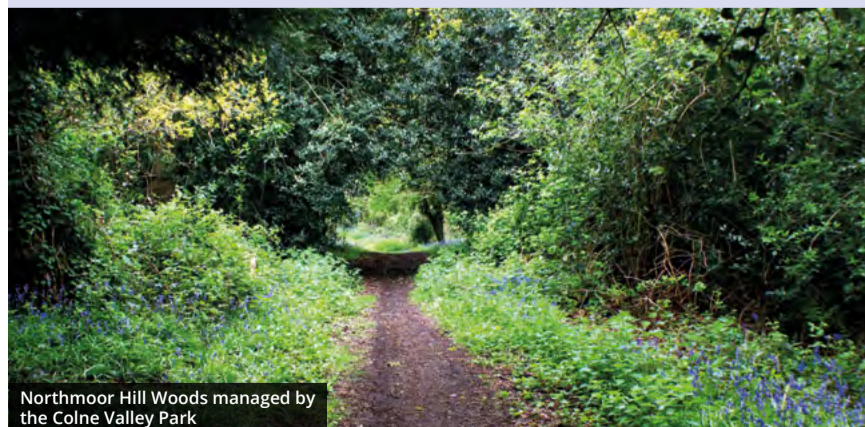
Company teams help to make a difference

We have been delighted to host several company days out recently with small teams helping to improve the Park, for both wildlife and people. Pictured above is one of the teams from Mace Group at Northmoor Hill Woods in Denham, improving the woods' biodiversity through removing sick Ash trees and invasive Laurel, and allowing native Hazel, wildflowers, and insects to flourish.

Nelson Hanna of Mace Group (in the picture above) told us: 'It's nice to have a break and be outside. During lockdown we worked longer hours and discovered how important it was to have a break. Then you're so much more efficient when returning to work. We'll be on fire tomorrow.'

Support from businesses and local people is vital in helping us to enhance and protect the Regional Park. Find out more about the difference you or your company could make on our 'Get involved' website page.

Mace Group's volunteers helped at Northmoor Hill Wood and Caps Wood in Denham. They are both ancient Woodlands -irreplaceable habitats we are proud to manage and care for. See the Denham woods 'what we do' page on our website for more information



Northmoor Hill Woods managed by the Colne Valley Park



Grand Union Canal, Uxbridge Lock

WINTER WALKS IN THE COLNE VALLEY PARK

A walk in the countryside is a great way to blow away the cobwebs at this time of year, lifting not only your mood, but also providing you with some important exercise, too. Enjoy this winter season to the full with a variety of 18 different scenic, circular walks across the Regional Park, which can be downloaded via our website's 'visit' page (www.colnevalleypark.org.uk) or purchased for a small charge from our Colne Valley Park Visitor Centre at Denham Country Park.

On our websites 'walk' page you will also find an article on our favourite winter walks for you to enjoy, as well as other walking trails and activities to try.

Some of our favourite walks listed on our website include; - Denham Woodlands, Langley Country Park, Staines Moor, Runnymede and Ankerwycke, Rickmansworth Lakes, and Denham Country Park. Which ones have you tried?

Why not take the opportunity to meet up with friends and family, get the children away from their screens and have a good catch up with the people you care about, and enjoy the many gifts that Nature and the Colne Valley Park will provide?



Denham Country Park

Colne Valley Regional Park is fighting for its life

The Regional Park was established in 1965 to protect and enhance the precious countryside remaining on the western edge of London. However, the Colne Valley Park is now fighting for its life.



We do not make this claim lightly. The commercial pressure on Green Belt has never been greater, especially at the urban fringe. One lesson learned during the pandemic was the immense importance green space had for people's health and well-being, and there has to be an urgent recalibration of the political will to protect and use the green belt for the benefit of people and wildlife. Once it's gone, it's gone.

Stewart Pomeroy has been the Colne Valley Park Partnership Manager for more than 10 years and is urging people to help. He tells us:

"The Colne Valley Regional Park is under immense pressure. We have contacted the nine MPs whose constituencies cover the Park to outline the issues and set out how they can help. The briefing to local MPs is a chilling document, and one that must be taken notice of."

You can see our briefing note and more details on our website "[news](#)" page.

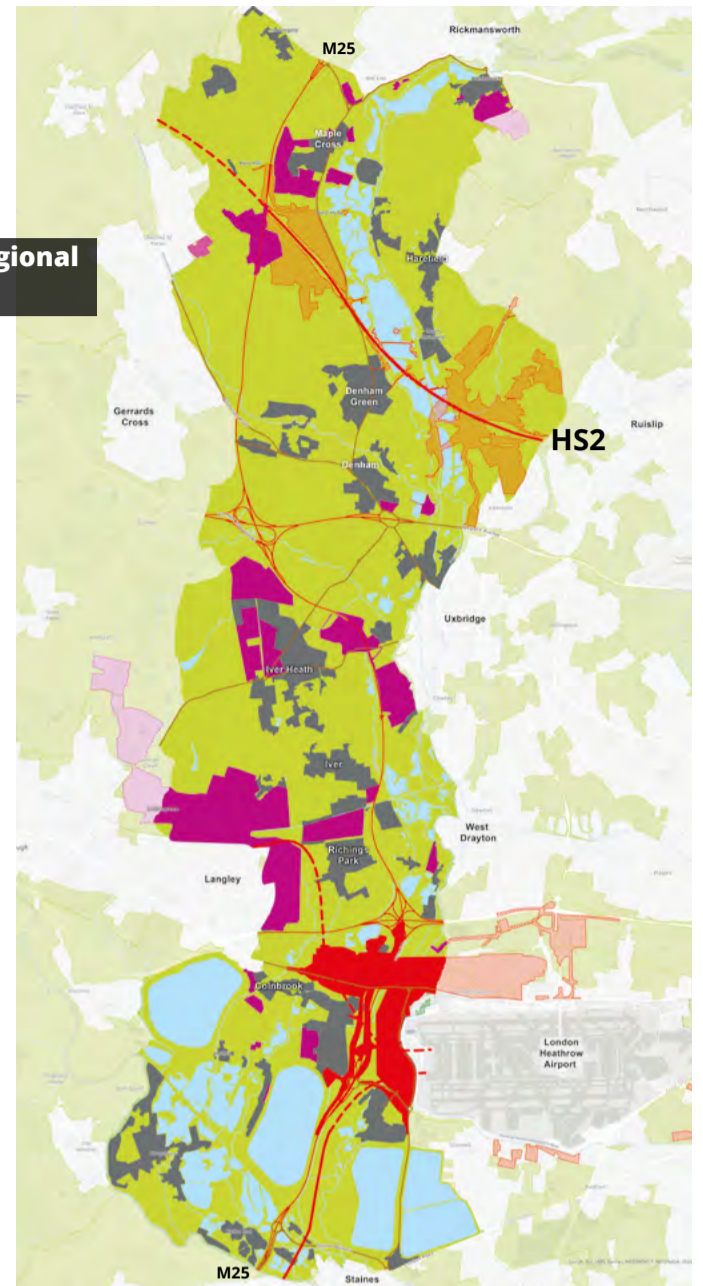
If you care about your green spaces, countryside and rivers, please let your MP know and help to support your Colne Valley Park.

The Colne Valley Regional Park (The Future?)

Stewart Pomeroy, Colne Valley Park Partnership Manager

Key

- Colne Valley Regional Park (Green Belt)
- Main built up areas
- Green Belt & Metropolitan Open Land outside CVRP
- Green Belt proposed development sites (dashed areas = outside CVRP)
- HS2 rail in the north (dashed = tunnel)
- HS2 construction / other works
- Proposed Heathrow Expansions (dashed = outside CVRP)
- Proposed rail access to Heathrow in the south



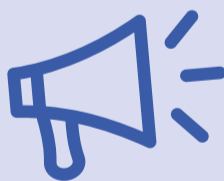
Nature snaps

Here are a few images captured by visitors to the Park.



Help us to protect the Park

If you would like to help us safeguard the Colne Valley Park for the future, please:



- Write to your MP to highlight the importance of conserving the Park
- Sign up to our newsletter via our website to stay up to date
- Follow us on our social media pages listed below, and help us to speak up for the Park
- Volunteer with us via our website

Become a Colne Valley Friend

Would you like to help us protect and enhance the Colne Valley Park?

Please join the Friends of the Park to support our endeavors. Benefits include:

- Invitations to events and guided walks
- Opportunities to volunteer locally
- Regular newsletters and information
- Special offers with our Riverside café and other venues

Please see our website:

colnevalleypark.org.uk/become-a-champion/ or send us an email.

Donate to the Colne Valley Park

Your gift could help us:

- In our weekly conservation tasks in parks, meadows and wetlands
- Maintain woods and wetland for the benefit of people and wildlife.
- Respond to development proposals including Heathrow, motorway services etc.

Please see our website:

colnevalleypark.org.uk/donate or send us an email.



With thanks to our corporate supporters for their continued commitment to us: Lakeside Energy from Waste, Red Squirrel Brewing Co. and



The Colne Valley Park Community Interest Company represents more than 70 member organisations. Each of these organisations and our financial contributors support the six objectives of the Colne Valley Regional Park which revolve around improving and protecting the local:

- Landscape
- Countryside
- Biodiversity
- Countryside recreation
- Rural economy
- Community participation

With thanks to: Buckinghamshire Council, Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council, Denham Parish Council, Friends of the Colne Valley Park, Horton Parish Council, Iver & District Countryside Association, Iver Parish Council, London Borough of Hillingdon, Slough Borough Council, and Wexham Parish Council, for their financial contributions.

Newsletter sponsors



HS2 Mitigation Funds Some readers have told us they were surprised to see we have received some mitigation funding from HS2, despite our opposition to the project. HS2 is obliged to provide funding to compensate for its considerable impact on the local countryside, and we make no apology for applying for those funds where applicable. You can find our position statement on HS2 on our website, in the Safeguarding the Countryside section. If you have any further questions, please email us at enquiry@colnevalleypark.org.uk