



Explore Your Colne Valley Regional Park



PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON PROTECTION FOR THE COLNE VALLEY

An adjournment debate on the subject Protection of the Colne Valley Regional Park was held at the House of Commons on 11th July 2025, led by Joy Morrissey, MP for Beaconsfield. See further details on this exciting development at <https://shorturl.at/TEbtP>



Made possible with

**Heritage
Fund**

STOP PRESS: Lottery Funding secured for 'Colne Connections' Project

Development funding of £190,000 has been awarded by the Heritage Fund to help Colne Valley Regional Park progress its plans to apply for a full National Lottery grant of £5.2m.

We will deliver three pilot projects over the next 18 months, work with local councils and community groups to identify how we can improve your local landscape, and compile a detailed application for full funding with the aim of saving the landscape heritage of the Colne Valley; making it possible to embrace change/development whilst protecting the Park's heritage, history and value for accessible recreation.

Further info at:

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/project/colne-connections/>

LET'S CREATE THE BEST GREEN CORRIDOR AROUND ANY CITY IN EUROPE



The countryside on the edge of large cities is crucially important for both people and wildlife. Recent changes to national planning policy threaten the Colne Valley and other areas like it. Yet with this threat could come the opportunity to create highly protected, well managed and connected green spaces around our cities. We need to fight for the countryside on your doorstep.

Current national planning policy doesn't acknowledge the undoubted value of the Green Belt. In fact, far too many politicians see it solely as a barrier to growth; a dangerously narrow view that overlooks its potential to provide overwhelming public benefit.

We are already seeing many huge bites taken out of the Green Belt without any convincing plan for making the most of what remains.

"We firmly believe the countryside on the edge of large cities has a critical role to play in improving the health and well-being of millions of people living nearby. We see no reason why the immense amount of development being proposed between Rickmansworth, Chalfont St Peter, Uxbridge, Iver, Slough, Heathrow and Staines, cannot provide the finance to create the best-managed and best-connected green corridors for people and wildlife round any city in Europe."

The Colne Valley is nationally important for wildlife and is on the doorstep of millions of people, therefore it is the ideal place where the government could demonstrate how it can achieve the aims of its growth agenda and provide attractive places for people to experience nature and green space, with all the physical and mental health benefits that brings. Please see further details at <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/lets-create-the-best-green-corridor/>

LANDSCAPE RECOVERY IN AND AROUND HORTON, WRAYSBURY, COLNBROOK AND POYLE

One of the hidden gems in the south of the Colne Valley is Arthur Jacob Nature Reserve and its stunning neighbour, Poyle Poplars Woodland.

This beautiful wetland reserve features four reedbeds and an attractive riverside setting. Next door, Poyle Poplars Woodland offers a peaceful, shaded walk—a haven of tranquillity so close to Heathrow. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead owns and manages the reserve, and the Colne Valley Park Landscape Recovery team is working with the council to enhance the site for wildlife and people.

The entrances have been suffering from increasing litter problems, making the area feel unwelcoming. We have made a good start with our team, clearing most of the litter at the entrance. This work will continue.



Many thanks to our fab volunteers Mike & Carole, clearing litter with Xavier & Sue

We are also welcoming corporate volunteer groups including this team from SEGRO, whose main task was coppicing Hazel and Field Maple in Poyle Poplars to improve biodiversity by opening up areas to sunlight and enabling other plants to establish.



Introducing our new Trustees

We are delighted to confirm four new additions to our Board of Trustees. Find out a little more about them below:

Barnaby Briggs spent his career working on environmental and social issues both for the RSPB and for energy companies. Barnaby is currently Chair of the Wildlife and Wetlands Trust (WWT). A long-time birdwatcher, Barnaby also loves trying to identify the hundreds of moths in his garden which lies almost at the centre of the Colne Valley Regional Park.

Santokh Chhokar is a solicitor with offices in Southall and Gerrards Cross. He has been involved in local community activities and has served as Trustee, Chairman and Secretary for charities and as a School Governor. He has served as a Councillor at South Bucks District Council (where he was Chairman for two years), and more recently as a Buckinghamshire Councillor.

Sam Hatfield has considerable breadth of experience derived from 20 years leading businesses, including as Director of the Chiltern Open Air Museum and Chief Exec of the Cure Parkinsons Trust. He has also worked for ten years serving as a Foreign Office diplomat, and five years working in legal service.

Debbie Valman was nominated by the Friends of the Colne Valley Regional Park to serve as their 'Friends Representative'. Debbie worked for Groundwork South for more than 14 years, mostly in the Colne Valley team, leaving a legacy of projects that have enhanced the Park including the 'Colne Valley Food' farmers support programme, and managing delivery of a £2.5m Heritage Lottery Project.



Left to Right: Sam, Santokh, Debbie & Barnaby exploring the Colne Valley



We recently spent the day with Natural England (the UK government's official adviser on the natural environment) looking at the importance of the Colne Valley for wildlife and people, including the health and wellbeing benefits of access to the countryside right next to London.

"Thank you for welcoming us, and taking the time to show us around. Such a thought-provoking discussion about how a place like Colne Valley Regional Park meets the needs of so many by providing nature on their doorstep. Look forward to continuing to discuss how that can be maximised." Edel McGurk Regional Director (South east), Natural England

Ankerwycke Update

National Trust rangers at Runnymede and Ankerwycke have been working to bring back two nationally endangered wetland plants: Greater Water Parsnip (*Sium latifolium*) and Round Fruited Rush (*Juncus compressus*). Once present in Langham Pond, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Runnymede, both species had declined to the point of local extinction.

In response, the team partnered with the Millennium Seed Bank at Kew to safeguard plant material, while also propagating specimens on-site. Some of the first plants were grown on the lead ranger's own window ledge, before being transferred into troughs built from salvaged propagation tables donated by a local garden centre. Kept in these water-filled beds, the plants have thrived, and the team has gradually begun reintroducing them – not only to Langham Pond, but also to ponds at Ankerwycke, which is part of the Colne Valley Regional Park.

Though these are early days, this reintroduction marks a significant step in restoring native wetland flora to the wider landscape. It reflects the value of long-term stewardship, practical innovation and collaborative effort needed to drive nature recovery.



National Trust Rangers Tom and Andrew reintroducing endangered plant species to our landscape.

Partners join together for canalside clean-ups

The Colne Valley Regional Park and the Canal and River Trust have been organising joint litter-picking and general tidy-up sessions by the Grand Union Canal on the edge of Denham Country Park, and along the Canal's Slough Arm. Local groups involved include Bucks Country Parks, ReAP recycling, Friends of the Colne Valley, the ACT Foundation UK and Hillingdon Litter Pickers.

The aim was to clear the large amounts of litter that had accumulated along the Canal, which had spoiled what would ordinarily be an enjoyable walk along the towpaths. With this incredible partnership work and the hard-working teams, we achieved more than we had hoped for!

Canal & Rivers Trust made this possible by removing and disposing of the Litter at the end of the day- even bringing a barge along to help! We would like to send our huge thanks to Canal & River Trust, and all those who joined us for these events.

There is still more to be done, and, with funding from Heathrow Community Trust, we will be organising another 10 community days.



VOLUNTEER WITH US

If you would like to volunteer to join our amazing gang of litter pickers, please email enquiry@colnevalleypark.org.

Colne Valley Park Forum 2025

We held our annual forum at Uxbridge Golf Club on 15th May 2025. The event was attended by 90 people, and we were able to talk about the work we are undertaking across the Park.

The forum was opened by Hugh Stokes, Chair of the Colne Valley Park Trust and started with presentations from the Colne Valley and London Wildlife Trust, then questions. There was also discussion about our wider concerns about the Colne Valley, and we were interested in hearing our guests' views on how we can work collectively to protect, promote and enhance this precious landscape. The delegates were then split into



groups by area for landscape recovery workshops. After lunch and networking, we were joined by Danny Beales, MP for Uxbridge and South Ruislip, who rounded off the forum with a talk followed by more questions.

We'd like to thank Danny and London Wildlife Trust for taking part and also everyone who attended. Their input was extremely valuable, and we hope everyone left feeling suitably inspired.

Nature snaps

See who we've spotted around the Colne Valley Park recently.



Poplar Hawk Moth; Maple Cross Nature Reserve

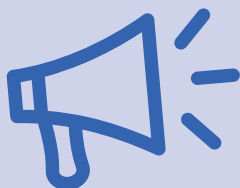


Grey Wagtail

Help us to protect the Park

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

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 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:



The Colne Valley Regional Park is supported by more than 90 member organisations. Each of these organisations support the six objectives of the Colne Valley Regional Park which revolve around improving and protecting local:

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

With thanks to: Batchworth Community Council, Buckinghamshire Council, Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council, Denham Parish Council, Friends of the Colne Valley Park, Gerrards Cross Town Council, Horton Parish Council, Iver & District Countryside Association, The Ivers Parish Council, London Borough of Hillingdon, Spelthorne Borough Council, Wexham Parish Council and Wraysbury 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

Website: www.colnevalleypark.org.uk | Email: enquiry@colnevalleypark.org.uk | Tel: 01895 839859

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