



## Friends of the Nickey Line Newsletter 17 – April 2014

### WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER?

- *AGM Advance notice 8<sup>th</sup> May – Ver Valley Owl Talk*
- *Ambrose Lane and Park Hill Work Progress – New Ramp Open*
- *M1 Tunnel Lights back on*
- *New Grant from Councillor David Williams – Many thanks David*
- *Dacorum £10,000 funding for resurfacing*
- *New Notice Board vandalised*
- *St Albans District Council now allowing dog waste in litter bins*
- *Events and Work Parties Update*
- *Book Holidays with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays and Earn the Friends £s*
- *Can You Help? We need more work party volunteers and 2 committee members*

**AGM -Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May at Park Hall, Harpenden, at 7.30 pm with Talk by John Fisher on "Ver Valley Barn Owl Project 2004/14"**

This has probably been the most successful year we have had with significant works and funding success. Do come along and support us at the AGM and enjoy hearing about the Ver Valley's interesting owl project. Free refreshments.

### WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE NICKEY LINE

#### Harpenden Ambrose Lane and Park Hill Work Progress

- The surface has been tarmacked from Hollybush Lane to Roundwood Crossing with a coloured top dressing added.
- Park Hill steps work will begin when the wood material arrives (expected shortly)
- The Ambrose Lane cycle / buggy/ disabled access ramp is open unofficially with minor finishing tasks still to do. Ambrose Lane bridge has also been repaired.





One of the first users was local resident 96 year old Mary Saunders who successfully drove up and down the ramp in her buggy. Her comment: –

*'Whoever designed the ramp deserves a medal!'*

If you know any wheelchair or buggy users locally, do tell them about the improved access.

## The M1 Tunnel Finally Gets New Lights



Following agreement between St Albans District Council, Redbourn Parish Council and the Highways Agency, the old (and much vandalised) lights have now been replaced with a reduced number of more vandal resistant ones.

These are lit during the day – not night time when it is little used and any cyclists will have their own lights anyway.

## New Footpath Link

The Friends and the Ver Valley Society have been involved in clearing the chalk bank on the south facing side of the cutting at the bottom of Redbourn Lane, which supports some interesting flora, including orchids.

The old road ran along the top of this slope and an approximately 400 yard footpath has been cut along the former route, linking footpath Redbourn 6 (which descends from the other side of Redbourn Lane using steps from the direction of Hammonds End Farm) to the Nickey Line close to where it meets Redbourn Lane. The sight lines crossing Redbourn Lane are poor if heading away from the Nickey Line and we recommend the path is walked the other way around.

## Part of Redbourn Bi-Pass Section Resurfaced



Many thanks to Redbourn Parish Council who have resurfaced the part of their section of Line - from Harpenden Lane / Redbourn Lane roundabout to the High Street - with crushed concrete.

## Dog Bins

St Albans District Council policy is now to allow dog owners to put dog waste into standard litter bins as well as designated dog bins. Please do pick up your dog's waste to keep the Line pleasant for other users.

NB Dog poo even in the grass at the side of the Line can create a powerful smell in the summer and is not nice for local residents living by the Line - or our work party volunteers when they are working in the area at any time in the year.

## Dacorum News

Dacorum Borough Council have been pruning trees on the Thumpers section and plan to do more by Mayflower Avenue. They have also repaired the rugby field steps.

D.B.C. have £10,000 of section 106 planning gain funds which they currently plan to use for resurfacing the Line where it is eroded and waterlogged between Fletcher Way bridge and Redbourn Road. Great news...

The Nickey Line now stops at the Midland Road bridge which has increasingly been covered by ivy in recent years. One of our Dacorum based members, Roger Green, organised removing the ivy with the help of several local volunteers. It took nearly 50 hours of work but the bridge now looks magnificent. Thanks to Roger and his helpers - and also to D.B.C. for removing the resulting rubbish.

## FRIENDS NEWS

### Grant for Tables and Banners

Many thanks to County Councillor David Williams for a generous grant of £350 from his Locality Budget for much needed mobile tables and display banners to be used at events and on Line activities.

## Board News - Roundwood Crossing

The new information board has been damaged by vandals and needs a new plastic front.

## Ramblers Worldwide Holidays Walking Partnership –Reminder

Book a holiday with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays ([www.ramblersholidays.co.uk](http://www.ramblersholidays.co.uk)) and you can nominate Friends of the Nickey Line to receive £10 per head for UK holidays, £20 for short haul holidays, and £30 per head for long haul holidays.

**\*\*You must nominate Friends when you book! \*\***

## YOUR COMMITTEE – CAN YOU HELP?

We urgently need please:

- another committee member from Hemel Hempstead, and
- some one to support our internet communications – website, Facebook and Twitter in particular.

Can you help? Email [friends@nickeyline.org](mailto:friends@nickeyline.org) or ring 01582 622771 to chat about what you could do.

**EVENTS PLANNED – Dates for Your Diary** – See [www.nickeyline.org](http://www.nickeyline.org) for details.

**AGM -Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> May at Park Hall, Harpenden, at 7.30 pm** with Talk by John Fisher on "Ver Valley Barn Owl Project 2004/14"

**Come and See the Orchids, Sunday 15 June at 10am**

The Ver Valley Society and the Friends of the Nickey Line are holding a joint walk to view the orchids blooming at two of their sites.

Starting at the car park at Redbourn Common this five mile circular walk will visit a bee orchid site on the Nickey Line near the M1 tunnel, and also visit the chalk slopes on the side of Redbourn Lane, where we hope to also see pyramidal orchids. Wear stout footwear.

Contact Roger on 01582 763560 or John on 01582 792843 for further details

**WORK PARTIES** –Our main work programme is over the Winter but we need more work party volunteers! Even an hour or two would be welcomed if you cannot stay all day, and you will enjoy yourselves. Contact us if you can help or want to find out more.

**\*\*\*DO WE HAVE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?\*\*\***

Can we send you our newsletters by email in future? Please email us at [friends@nickeyline.org](mailto:friends@nickeyline.org) if we can!