



Friends of the Nickey Line Newsletter 22 – November 2017

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WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE NICKEY LINE

Dacorum News

Dacorum GAP Plan

Dacorum Borough Council have asked Countryside Management Service (CMS) to produce a Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) for their section of the Nickey Line. The GAP is to be produced this financial year, with implementation from 2018-2019. We very much welcome this as it will mean all the Line will then be covered by an up to date management plan.

East Hemel Hempstead Development

A second public consultation was held on this over the summer. We have strongly advocated a Toucan crossing of the new road cutting through the Nickey Line and improved access to and from the Nickey Line in this section east and west of Cherry Tree Lane.

A formal planning application for the scheme will be made in due course but no firm date for this is available yet. Advisory meetings are to continue in the meantime.

Hunters Wood, Spencer's Park Door Drop

With the help of local volunteer Tina Howard, we have arranged a door to door drop encouraging local use of the Nickey Line and seeking new members.

Redbourn News

Main Road Crossings

We are having sight line problems again on the Redbourn Lane roundabout and we are chasing Herts Highways over regular vegetation management. We continue to seek improvements to crossing safety and ease of use.

Redbourn Lane Car Park – Access Improved

After much chancing, Herts Highways have increased the gap between bollards at the entrance to the small car park near the Redbourn roundabout. Access is now easier although please note that care is still required particularly on entering. We have also moved a pile of fly tipped earth and debris to restore parking and turning space in the car park.



Redbourn Car Park- Before Bollards



Redbourn Car Park – With Bollards

Redbourn Classic Cars Day

Friends supported the first Redbourn Classic Cars day with a membership table and gained several new Friends as well raising wider awareness of the Nickey Line.

Harpenden News

We have successfully raised with St Albans DC the need for vegetation management on the Luton Road bridge to prevent long term root damage. We understand this will be undertaken over the winter months.

FRIENDS NEWS

New Facebook Group “The Nickey Line”

With the support of the Harpenden Town Council media team, we have launched a new Facebook Group “The Nickey Line” for all Nickey Line users to publish pictures, comments and stories about the Line. Why not join the group today and add your favourite photos and stories?

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/363326034099616>

Ramblers Worldwide Holidays Walking Partnership

We continue to receive donations from our arrangement with this company –
 Reminder: Book a holiday with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays
 (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! ****

Nickey Line Work Parties

Countryside Management Services have run several work parties on the NL. In late September the grass scallops opposite Knott Wood were cut and raked, and the hedge managed to provide winter views towards Redbourn.

Further work is planned for Wednesday 29 November and 6 December - these will both be along the Redbourn section of the Nickey Line.

Next Work Party Tuesday 14 November at the above location, from 10 a.m. We have a tremendous group of volunteers and we enjoy ourselves immensely as well as improving the wildlife. If you have not joined us before and are considering it, please contact Roger Thornhill on rogerjan76@gmail.com. Any contribution is appreciated - you don't have to stay into the afternoon.

Work Party 10 December will be at the Harpenden end of the line and will include 'festive refreshments'. Details will be confirmed nearer the time by email and on our website'.

Hemel Hempstead Work Parties – Our thanks go to Roger Green and his dedicated group of local volunteers who run work parties at the Hemel end of the pathway, including on litter collection. The next work party is Cherry Tree Lane on Thursday 2 November at 9.30 - morning only.

If you wish to join in our work to improve the Nickey Line in and around Dacorum, contact roger_green2015@icloud.com, tel 01442 257030.



Litter Bagged for Council Collection



Some of Our Intrepid Litter Volunteers

Walks Programme

Butterfly Walk at the end of July: The weather obliged, as without sun few butterflies are to be seen, and rain is a complete turnoff. Eleven different species were seen, the pick being a second brood holly blue, and a silver washed fritillary - a first recording for this magnificent butterfly (thought extinct from Hertfordshire in the late 1970s) on the Nickey Line and present where the habitat is being managed for butterflies! A very welcome result from our volunteers' hard work.

Nickey Line Autumn Walk – Sunday 24th September: Ten people joined Geoff Bunce for a walk along the Nickey Line and surrounding countryside to check out the variety of wild berries and nuts in the hedgerows and to learn something of the folklore and mythology associated with them.

There were plenty of berries, not so many nuts, but certainly plenty of interesting stories, mostly to do with either love and fertility or warding off evil spirits. In the former category, it used to be thought that if a young woman wore a sprig of hawthorn blossom (commonly known as 'may') it would help her to attract a husband. In the latter category, it was thought that a staff of ash hung over door frames would ward off evil influences. Slightly more bizarre is the idea that elder was considered to be a mischievous tree and if you mistreated one during your life then after your death a hand would grow out of your grave!

See our website www.nickeyline.org for events as they are announced.

Nickey Line Talk To Your Local Group ?

We typically give 2 – 4 illustrated talks a year on the History of the Nickey Line to local organisations who want a guest speaker, in return for a small donation to the Friends.

If you know of any organisation who may want one, please suggest they email us on friends@nickeyline.org.

YOUR COMMITTEE – CAN YOU HELP?

We need **another committee member from Hemel Hempstead** - Even a small amount of your time would be very welcome to help us monitor the Hemel Hempstead section of the Nickey Line and give feedback to Dacorum Borough Council. Can you help? Email friends@nickeyline.org or ring 01582 622771 to chat about what you could do.

Comments and feedback on this newsletter and any aspect of the Nickey Line are welcomed – email friends@nickeyline.org.