



Friends of the Nickey Line Newsletter 25 – May 2019

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WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE NICKEY LINE

Planning and Funding Issues

East Hemel Development

We have been informed that the planning application for East Hemel will be submitted later this year. This will be the first phase of the Hemel Garden Communities proposal which was approved by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government in March. The development will include a new north south road being driven through the Nickey Line and significant extra usage of the Line is expected from the new communities created.

St Albans District Local Plan

The SADC Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2019. It has not been changed significantly since the early draft, which is disappointing given the many comments made on it, including by the Friends.

Lottery Application

Friends have met with Countryside Management Service (CMS) on proposals for a lottery application by CMS later this year to fund heritage enhancements along the Nickey Line.

Hemel Hempstead News

Dacorum Council and GAP Plan

Dacorum B.C. have approved the Nickey Line Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) produced by Countryside Management Service after consultation with Friends of the Nickey Line (along with other interested parties). **The author Greg Ault will present and discuss the GAP at the Friends AGM at St Paul's church in Hemel Hempstead on 16th May. (See the AGM details on page 2).**

Redbourn News

Redbourn Lane Car Park

Friends have met Herts Highways staff and requested a slight widening of the entrance to avoid unnecessary risk of damage to users' vehicles. However, we continue to recommend users to go round the roundabout and turn right into the car park to enter as close as possible to 90 degrees (NB with care re the fast moving traffic).

Redbourn Dog / General Waste Bins

Friends have asked SADC to add a general waste bin along the Chequer Lane / Hemel Hempstead Road section. (General waste bins can be used for dog waste).

Chequer Lane Cycle Ramp

Plans for a new cycle ramp are progressing with funds now earmarked.

Harpenden News

Second Commemorative Plaque

The current proposal is that the recently discovered copy of the 1985 plaque commemorating the opening of the Nickey Line as a footpath/cycleway should be included in the Roundwood Halt refurbishment celebrating its heritage which will be included in the planned lottery application. (The first copy of the plaque is mounted in the Redbourn Millenium Site).



New Plaque Found Still On Its Board



The Millenium Site Plaque

FRIENDS NEWS

TALK ON NEW DACORUM MANAGEMENT PLAN (GAP) + AGM - Thursday 16th May, 7.30 pm St Paul's Church, Solway, Hemel Hempstead, HP2 5QN

Greg Ault from Hertfordshire Countryside and Rights of Way will talk about the new Green Action (Management) Plan for the Dacorum part of the Nickey Line. Greg also was heavily involved with the current St Albans DC "GAP" so can talk knowledgeably about the management plan for the whole of the Nickey Line.

The talk will be preceded by a short AGM for the Friends of the Nickey Line. **This is the first time we have held our AGM in Hemel Hempstead so please do come along to help make it a success.** Free light refreshments will be provided.

Facebook Group "The Nickey Line" - Our Facebook Group now has over 300 users who publish pictures, comments and stories about the Line as well as communicating problems noticed. Why not join the group today and add your favourite photos and stories?

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

Ramblers Worldwide Holidays Walking Partnership - 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! ****

Work Parties Report

Users of the NL will have seen numerous changes over the winter period through the activities of our fantastic group of volunteers, who worked at locations along the entire 7 miles of the Nickey Line:

- A large number of self sets have been removed alongside Park Hill, using tree poppers kindly lent us by Harpenden Town Council
- In a joint work party with CMS, hedging was trimmed back and a new 'pig viewing area' created alongside the small holding near the Townsend Lane '5 Ways' junction. This has been very popular, particularly with family users
- Two new open areas (scallops) have been created and extended between the 5 Ways junction and Knott Wood, and fires held to burn the cuttings
- The previous 4 scallops in the area of Knott Wood have been cut and raked, and the views re-established.
- Hazels have been coppiced alongside Knott Wood
- CMS have coppiced a lot of hazels between Chequer Lane towards the M1 tunnel. Similar work was also carried out beside Owens Sidings, opposite the bench seat
- Numerous work parties have been held near Cherry Tree Lane Bridge, providing wonderful views of this historic bridge
- Much vegetation has been removed to open up views over parkland to the west of the Redbourn High Street Bridge
- Litter picks have been regularly held in Dacorum BC, led by our leader in Hemel Hempstead, Roger Green.

Why not join our volunteer team? Our work parties are fun and enjoyable, and a great way of contributing to making the Nickey Line even more enjoyable. You can work for as long as you wish, and all contributions are welcomed. Contact Geoff at geoffbunce@talk21.com or 07903 476584 to be added to our volunteer working party email notifications.

Walks Programme

Harpenden Springwatch Walk 2019 - Saturday 11th and also Sunday 12 May 2019 at the same time 10 a.m. (N.B. same walk). Meet at the top end of Amenbury Lane car park, Harpenden.

We shall walk on local footpaths, taking in Knott Wood, Porridge Pot, and part of the Nickey Line, about 5 miles in all, looking for evidence of the advancing Springtime. Wear stout

footwear and appropriate clothing. Contact Roger on 01582 763560, or email rogerjan76@gmail.com if you need further information.

Saturday 29 June 2019 Joint Guided Walk with Railway Ramblers - Hemel Hempstead to Harpenden (about 7 miles) with coffee stop in Redbourn before bussing back to Hemel. Contact Roger Green on 01442 257030 or email roger_green2015@icloud.com for details.

Come and See the Butterflies - Sunday 21 July at 10 a.m. Join our annual butterfly walk, meeting at the Roundwood Park School Crossing. The Nickey Line attracts large numbers of butterflies and, on this short walk of not more than 3 miles, we shall visit the area alongside Knott Wood where our work party volunteers have created an excellent habitat for butterflies. Wear stout footwear. No need to book. Contact Roger on 01582 763560 for details.

Bat Walk and Beliefs & Superstitions Walk - We intend to arrange a bat walk in the late summer and a 'beliefs and superstitions' walk in the autumn.

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 are pleased to welcome Harpenden based James Johnson to our small but enthusiastic committee.

We still need another **committee member from both Redbourn and Hemel Hempstead** - Even a small amount of your time would be very welcome to help us monitor these sections of the Nickey Line, give feedback to the Councils and to build our activities further. Can you help? It would not need to take much of your time but would be very valuable for us. Contact Chairman Dave Abernethy at friends@nickeyline.org or ring 01582 622771.

Friends of the Nickey Line 01582 622771 www.nickeyline.org friends@nickeyline.org