

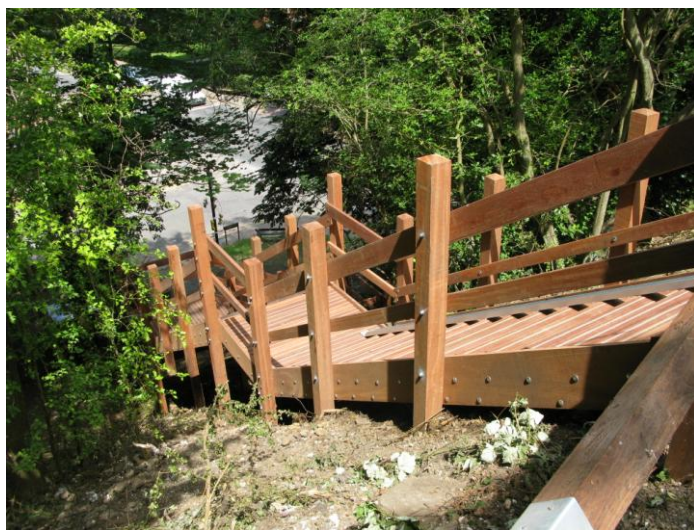
## WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER?

- **New Park Hill steps in frequent use**
- **New Ambrose Lane Ramp To Have Saplings Planted**
- **Tables and Banners purchased with Grant from Councillor David Williams**
- **Dacorum tree and resurfacing update**
- **Redbourn crossings**
- **Nickey Line appeared in CPRE Herts Calendar - photos**
- **Events and Work Parties Update**
- **Book Holidays with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays and Earn the Friends £s**
- **We need work party volunteers and a Dacorum committee member**

## WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE NICKEY LINE

### New Harpenden Park Hill Steps Being Well Used

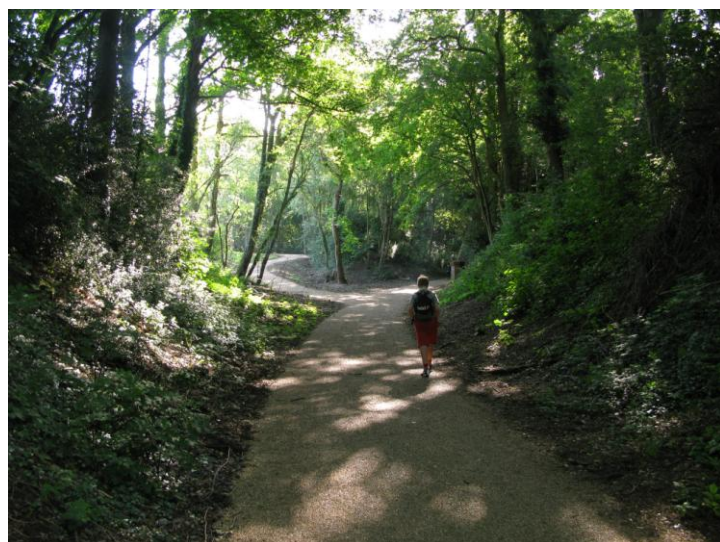
The splendid new Park Hill steps opened in July are in frequent use. We want to thank Sustrans who managed the project which was funded by Dept of Transport monies.



### New Ambrose Lane Ramp To Have Saplings Planted

The new Harpenden Ambrose Lane ramp is also being well used. We have seen an increase in cyclists on this section, much as expected, but many walkers are also using the ramp instead of the steps.

We have just received agreement from the Woodland Trust to provide us with a free mixed species 'small hedgerow' pack of 30 saplings to plant in the Spring at the bottom of the new ramp, still a bit bare after the construction work.





## Dacorum News

The Industrial Estate section between Redbourn Road and Eastman Way has been marked by yellow paint showing directions and the name Nickey Line

This is a much needed improvement in this previously poorly signposted section. Coming from the West, it is good but unfortunately is not as clear from the East (see right). We have asked for some small changes to improve this.



Dacorum Borough Council have either improved or completely resurfaced sections of the footpath up to the edge of Yew Tree Wood / Redbourn Road.

The new surface is good where done but there are many interspersed stretches (see right) left out from the Thumpers to Yew Tree Wood edge which are pretty cut up and muddy.

We have asked Dacorum Borough Council for these to be treated.



**Wider Path by Sky Ford, Redbourn Road**



**Wider Path Near Lower Adeyfield Road**



## Dacorum News (continued)

New, wider paths (see previous page) have been created from Redbourn Road to Yew Tree Wood, and also on the West end by Lower Adeyfield Road section through scrub to straighten the path.

Dacorum Borough Council have also cut back trees from adjacent properties along along parts of the Line where they were causing nuisance to residents through excessive overhanging.

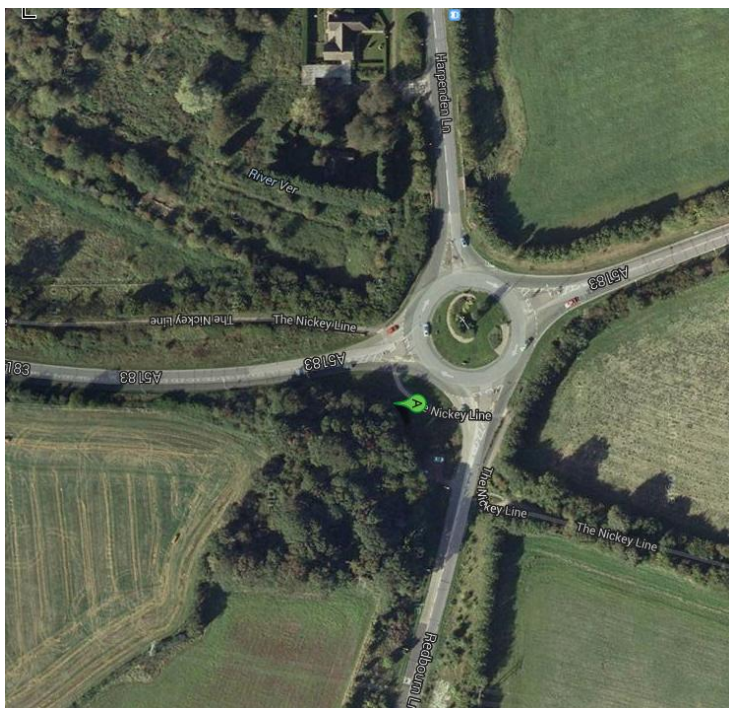
We very much welcome all this work undertaken by Dacorum Borough Council recently and look forward to further improvements when funding allows.

## Redbourn Crossings

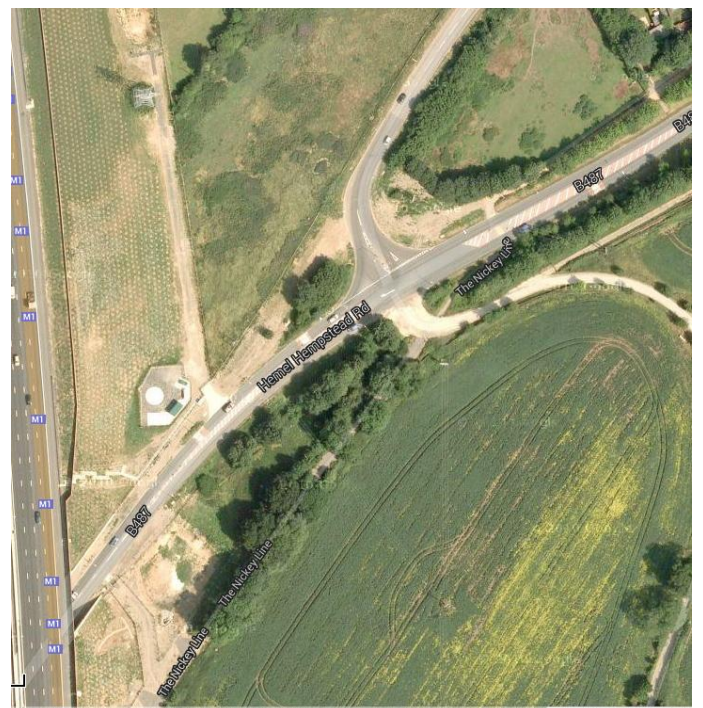
We have had comments and complaints from a variety of sources over the years about the hazards of using the three Redbourn Nickey Line road crossings, with fast moving traffic and poor sight lines being problems.

Besides the actual risks posed to Nickey Line present users, we are concerned that these crossings are causing many potential users to limit their or their family's use of this section of the Nickey Line.

We are proposing to survey local users and residents as a first step to assessing usage and perceptions. We welcome your views and comments on these crossings.



**Redbourn Roundabout Twin Crossing**



**Redbourn B487 Crossing**



## FRIENDS NEWS

We hope it's not too (!) late to wish all our Friends members a good 2015....

### Nickey Line Appeared in CPRE Herts Calendar

We want to thank **everyone** who contributed a photograph of the Nickey Line for the CPRE Herts 2015 calendar. The final two selected were a great snow scene from Alan Gahagan and a historic train shot by Hemel Hempstead's Alan Willmott who sadly died before the choice of his photo was announced.



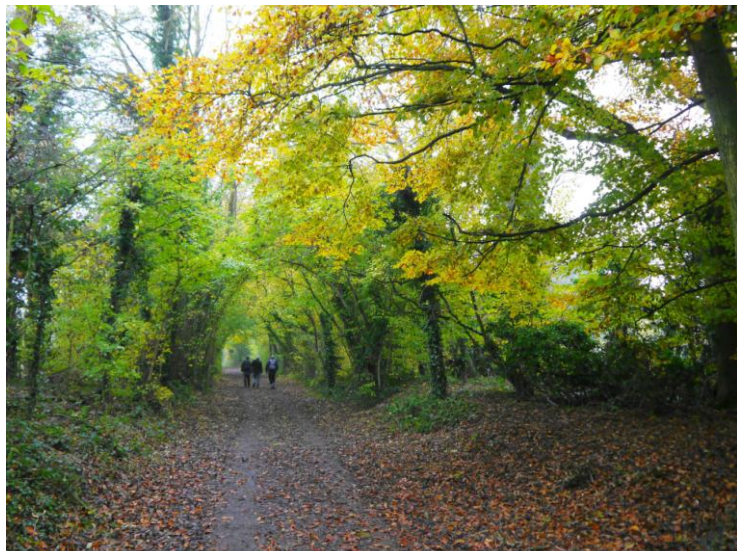
Friends committee member Roger Thornhill is shown to the right presenting Alan Gahagan with a copy of the CPRE calendar open at the November Nickey Line page.

We also show on the next page just two of the other photos that were proposed as possibilities (sorry we can't show them all!):

- Family Cycling by Sue Stevens, and
- Autumn View by Brendan Sheridan.







## **New Tables and Banners – Purchased**

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

## **Board News - Roundwood Crossing**

The new information board damaged by vandals needs a new plastic front. We hope to have this replaced shortly.

## **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.**

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

*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 District Council.*

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

**AGM -Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May at Park Hall, Harpenden, at 7.30 pm** with talk and video presentation on the Heartwood Forest.

### **WORK PARTIES (also see website)**

We run regular work parties (see website) to improve the Nickey Line as an amenity. This can involve coppicing hazels, hedge laying, scrub bashing, and grassland maintenance.

Many of you will have noticed four grassy areas in the vicinity of Knott Wood between Harpenden and Redbourn which we have recently cut and raked for the benefit flowers and butterflies, Cowslips have appeared here, a first for the Nickey Line, as a result. We have also recently reduced the hedge height to preserve the super views.



If you can spare some time to help us, even an hour or two, we would love to hear from you.

### **Work Party, Sunday 22 February 2015 at 10am**

Coppicing two large hazels, and opening up a view on the north side of the pathway. Meet about 1km towards Hemel Hempstead beyond the tunnel under the M1, by the first seat, situated on the south side of the path.

Aubrey Park Hotel on the Hemel Hempstead Road is allowing us to park in their car park, and the Friends are again very grateful for their support. From the car park, walk back to the road, turn right for about 50m, cross the road, and continue up the short drive to the Nickey Line, and turn right.

Tooling and safety gear provided, and morning drinks but bring a packed lunch if staying into the afternoon.

Contacts Geoff on 01582 712073 or Roger on 01582 763560

## **Work Party Tuesday 10 March 2015 at 10am**

Extending the laid hedge just below Knott Wood. The hedge is very bare, and we have already prepared the way by cutting out the dead wood, Further stakes will need pointing and binders cut. We may also coppice a few small hazels, depending on numbers attending.

Wear stout footwear, and bring a packed lunch if staying after lunch. Tools and gauntlets will be provided. Please contact Roger (01582 763560 or Geoff (01582 712073) to confirm if you will be coming. and bring a packed lunch if staying after lunch

## **WALKS (also see website)**

### **Come and See the Orchids, Sunday 14 June 2015 starting 10am**

Friends of the Nickey Line and the Ver Valley Society are repeating this very popular walk first held in June 2014 to view the orchids on two sites.

Starting from the car park on Redbourn Common, this 5 Mile circular walk will visit a bee orchid site on the Nickey Line, and the chalky slopes on the side of Redbourn Lane, where we hope to see pyramidal orchids as well as bee orchids.

For more information contact Roger on 01582 763560 or John Fisher on 01582 792843

### **Discover the Lost Railways of Hemel Hempstead, 10am Saturday 27 June 2015**

The Nickey Line currently starts at the Midland Road, Hemel Hempstead, but originally it started from the old Boxmoor Station, the section in between having been lost to development.

A local railway enthusiast and walker is leading a leisurely, illustrated, guided walk, with old photographs, tracing the route of the original line.

The walk will start at 10am at bus stop B outside Hemel Hempstead Railway Station, London Road. There is a shorter 3-mile route, ending at the 'Midland' pub for lunch, or a longer 5-mile walk in the afternoon completing the circuit back to the start point.

Please pre-register (this is a requirement\*) by contacting Roger Green On 01442 257030, or email [roger\\_green@btinternet.com](mailto:roger_green@btinternet.com) **Numbers are limited to 25.**

## **See the Butterflies on the Nickey Line, Sunday 26 July at 10 am**

The Nickey Line attracts large numbers of butterflies, and on this short walk of not more than 3 miles we will visit the area alongside Knott Wood, where our work party volunteers have been improving the habitat.

Meet at the Roundwood Park School crossing on the Nickey Line, and wear stout footwear. No need to book. Contact Roger on 01582 763560 for details.

See our website [www.nickeyline.org](http://www.nickeyline.org) for events as they are announced.

Comments and feedback on this newsletter and any aspect of the Nickey Line are welcomed – email [friends@nickeyline.org](mailto:friends@nickeyline.org).