

# THE VALLEY

## NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT OUSE VALLEY TRUST



August-September 2021



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### SAVE THE DATE!

#### NEXT PARTNER MEMBERS' WORKSHOP

27th NOVEMBER 10.30 am

Queen Elizabeth School in Queen Elizabeth School in  
Godmanchester

The theme will be TOURISM, LEISURE and THE ENVIRONMENT in the GREAT OUSE VALLEY. We will discuss the impact of active leisure such as watersports, cycling, fishing, boating etc on the natural and historic landscape, and how potential conflicts can be resolved. The pressures of people on key days of the year at places like Houghton Mill are well known. Does the Busway offer more opportunities to attract visitors from Cambridge?

Our keynote speaker will be Emma Thornton who has 18 years experience in city centre tourism and management. She has been Head of Tourism at Cambridge City Council, Huntingdon Town Centre Manager and is currently CEO of Visit Pembrokeshire. Our workshop will also be an opportunity for other issues to be raised and discussed. Coffee will be available from 10 am and sandwiches at 12.30 pm.

## NEWS FROM OUR PARTNER MEMBERS

### OUSE FEN PROJECT: OUR WETLAND WILDERNESS

We have one of Europe's most exciting conservation projects in the Great Ouse Valley. Eventually it will become a huge wetland wilderness of international significance.

The RSPB, a Partner Member of the Trust, continues to develop Ouse Fen close to Needingworth, Bluntisham and Earith. This is the 30-year commitment to improve this huge site for wildlife and people as Hanson finish their gravel extraction from this huge site. Reed beds and pools linked by ditches and channels are already in place in much of the area.



This map shows how the project will eventually look. To see the extent of the work completed and footpath access please follow the link on page 2.

You can see how things are progressing by parking in the new carpark on the B1050. To plan your visit go to [rspb.org.uk/ousefen](https://rspb.org.uk/ousefen) and the entrance can be found at <https://w3w.co/wacky.dabbling.enjoy>

#### ROTARY CLUBS SURVEYING THE OUSE VALLEY WAY

St Neots St Mary's, Huntingdon and Huntingdon Cromwell Rotary Clubs are all partner members and have been checking the condition of the Ouse Valley Way Long Distance Footpath. New Waymarker Posts supplied by the County Council from the A14 Legacy Fund grant will hopefully be installed by volunteers during the winter months.



## NEWS FROM THE TRUST

#### NEW COMMUNITY WOOD

Very little new woodland has been created in the Great Ouse Valley in recent centuries. Now we can announce that 1 acre of grassland immediately adjacent to the Ouse Valley Way is soon to be planted with 800 native tree saplings and 420 hedgerow saplings in November. This is a joint project between the Great Ouse Valley Trust, our Partner Member Godmanchester-in-Bloom and Huntingdonshire District Council. All parts of the local community including local primary schools and community groups as well as our Partner Members and supporters will assist in the big planting weekend. We look forward to providing more details of this exciting project in due course.

#### DESTRUCTION OF LANDSCAPE REPORTED

One of our trustees has recently reported the removal of trees and vegetation on the small island in the Alconbury Brook at the edge of Portholme Meadow. Portholme is an SSSI (Site Of Special Scientific Interest) largely within the parish of Brampton, although this small island is actually within Huntingdon. The trees have allegedly been removed by the developer of the adjacent gas works site. We are not aware of any planning consent being granted for the removal of these trees. Huntingdonshire District Council has stopped all further tree removal and has begun an investigation. The Trust is committed to protect our precious landscape.



### POOR AND DANGEROUS CONDITIONS UNDER THE A14

The new A14 has undoubtedly brought great benefits to drivers but it has also had a disastrous impact on the tranquillity of the River Ouse between Buckden and Brampton. There is not a lot that can be done to mitigate the traffic noise or the visual intrusion in what was once an idyllic landscape. However, the river banks under the flyover are in a very bad state. Features include a generally poor environment with poor fencing and, most significantly, dangerous collapse resulting from the vegetation no longer retaining the banks. At last Highways England has agreed to investigate what can be done. We will provide updates on this worrying situation in the next issue of *The Valley*.



### NEW TRUSTEES?

We shall shortly be able to confirm the name of a new trustee. However, there is still a vacancy for another enthusiastic trustee. We are particularly keen on welcoming someone, hopefully from the St Neots area, with an interest in IT and Social Media. Please contact us if you, or someone you know, may be willing to work with us as we tackle issues such as those outlined in the newsletter.

### REMINDER

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