

Porter Valley News

The newsletter of Friends of the Porter Valley - Registered Charity No. 1069865



Issue 109



April 2023

Completion of Work at Forge Dam

A talk by Claire Watts

Wednesday 3rd May, 7:30 - 9:30pm

Bents Green Methodist Church, Ringinglow Road



© Tom Hide

Before the talk we will have our Open Meeting.
After the talk, tea and biscuits, and a chance to chat with the committee and other members.

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We are now on the last leg of the project as the contractor is back on site. The temporary "Irish bridge", allowing machinery to reach all the pathways, has been rebuilt to enable the final surfacing of the paths. At the same time, the benches will be secured. Prior to these works, drainage pathways, as evidenced through the winter, will be improved. A safety station has been installed in accordance with the requirements of the Fire & Rescue Service.

Work on the bridleway is being carried out to deal with water oozing from the field in a few places. A pipe beneath the bridleway will also be installed. Along the route hedging "whips" have been planted to replace areas cut through by the contract works. Wild flower seeds have been scattered in part of the area near the inlet bridge. There is now a secure metal fence alongside the silt trap to enhance safety. The pond is now being re-occupied by wildlife and I was glad to see a kingfisher recently sitting on a branch on the island and evidence that it may also have a nest.

David Young



Stone Artwork for Forge Dam

Look out for Forge Dam visitors in stone, This one ton of carved sandstone may suddenly appear early one morning opposite the Forge Dam Cafe. This work will really appeal to children with its simple representations of water mill, heron, dipper, kingfisher, crow and runners. These can all be found in abundance at Forge Dam. And the runners will remind us of a real human visitor who loved the Porter Valley and loved running through it.

Ann le Sage

Duck Race in Pictures



They're off!



The sun shone, the rain fell and the wind blew! Easter bonnets and smiling kittens brightened our day and I think it's fair to say that all-in-all the race itself went well. £6838 was raised for the Forge Dam Playground Project.



First past the post



Meet the Lambs!

Andy Clark, his wife Pat and their son Matthew took over the management of Hangram Lane Farm from Andy's parents Robert and Janet. Our March walk coincided with the arrival of newly born lambs. Andy gave FoPV a guided



tour of the farm, 300 acres in total but not self-contained, with fields spread around the area. As well as sheep, beef cattle, pigs and turkeys are reared. In the first barn we saw the new born lambs. Some of the ewes who had initially rejected their lambs



were restrained to enable the lambs to suckle until eventually the mother accepted her lamb.

Limousin and Charolais bulls are bred for beef, and also shown at agricultural shows. They were remarkably docile when Andy stepped into the middle of them. The cattle are brought into barns during the winter as the ground is too soft for them but they will shortly return to the fields. After a very enjoyable and informative morning, we treated ourselves to some goodies from the farm shop. Many thanks to Andy and his family for making us welcome and arranging such an excellent visit.

Lyndon Porter



Birds in the Valley

It is heartening to note the apparent increase in interest in birds shown by the many visitors who walk in the valley. So many folk are now seen carrying a pair of binoculars, and will undoubtedly be asked the standard enquiry "Seen anything interesting?" Surely this upsurge in interest must be due to the regular sighting of that most colourful of birds, the Kingfisher.

We are indeed fortunate to see them at several dam sites from Endcliffe woods upstream to Ibbotson, Shepherd Wheel, Wiremill and even as far up the valley as Forge Dam. This is especially pleasing considering all the upheaval there over this last year. Many watchers can confidently tell the sex of each bird by the colour of the lower bill, and many photographers with enormous cameras frequent the dams on a daily basis, eager to get that dramatic moment when a fish is caught. Many wonderful shots can be seen on the FoPV Facebook group.

Chris Nicholson

February Work Mornings



Cutting back the hedge



Collecting beech saplings

At our first work morning in February, on a frosty and sunny day, our main task was to reduce the hedge by the brook opposite the playground to waist height to open up the sight line as well as widening the current access into the brook itself as part of the overall playground project. As always the worst part of such a task is the tidying up afterwards – having to bag up and carry away the cuttings. Ranger Matt's van was the first port of call for dumping the waste en-route to green disposal. Matt and his van are key ingredients of our work mornings... Amongst the litter

unearthed in the hedge was an unopened tin of Heinz Baked Beans!

Whilst the hedge cutters worked near the Playground, a second group cleared the goit to Wiremill Dam that had become blocked with debris, and by the end of the morning the water was flowing freely. A great morning's work.

When we met on February 28th, the valley resounded to the sound of chainsaws, as workmen were busily cutting down the dying trees previously marked for removal, as well as the tree which had fallen into the dam, requiring (as predicted in our last newsletter) a rowing boat to assist the process! The main task for us however was to find and dig up small self-set beech saplings in the surrounding woodland to plant in the gaps in the hedge which we had pruned on the previous work morning. Dave and his group planted around 40 beech saplings in the gaps. Our very own FOPV tree nursery!

Meanwhile, a small group was tidying up the area used by the contractors, near the hibernaculum. The plan was to remove any debris, load it into Matt's 4x4, then drive over the ground to flatten it before planting wild flower seed. As Matt drove lower down where the mud was soft his vehicle became well and truly stuck, and no amount of digging or putting wood underneath the wheels could shift it. Fortunately, the workmen removing the tree from the dam had a tractor on site and were able to rescue Matt, and the 4x4!



If you want to join us, we always welcome new volunteers. Either just turn up or, better still, check our website for details. You can register on our contact page and be included on our work morning list of volunteers to be kept up to date about meeting details.

Lyndon Porter

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Annual Membership:

Single: £10
Family: £15
Concession: £5

For membership forms
and online application
visit our website.

The Porter Valley in the Snow



Have you taken any snowy photos in the Porter Valley recently of which you are proud? If so, we would love to consider them for our FoPV Christmas cards. Please email to rodney.egglestone@btinternet.com For printing, the image should have been taken in high quality JPEG format. This can be achieved by either a phone or a camera. Best of luck!

Rod and Caroline Egglestone

Editorial

At the time of writing, preparation for the duck race is ongoing. Special thanks to the volunteers in waders and wellies who have cleared the debris that would otherwise impede the ducks on their journey to the finishing line. Thanks too to the 'eminence grise' (or should that be eminence blanche) Hilary White, who ensures that everything that should be on site at Endcliffe Park, actually is. And a final word of thanks to the Fulwood businesses who have kindly sold our knitted ducks for the first time this year. Fulwood Hardware and the Brook Coffee Rooms have joined Natures Way, le Crunch, and the cafes at Endcliffe Park and Forge Dam, in hosting our knitted creme egg-filled creations.

Thank you all.

Les and Ann Greenwood

Activities for August to November

Any changes in the following details will be available on the website

When and Where	What and Who
Wednesday 3 rd May, 7.30 pm Bents Green Methodist Church Hall	The completion of work on Forge Dam Open meeting and talk by Claire Watts
Thursday 11 th May, 9.30 am	Conservation work morning
Saturday 20 th May, 10 am – 4 pm Botanical Gardens	Sheffield Tree Fayre
Tuesday 23 rd May, 9.30 am	Conservation work morning
Saturday 10 th June, 10 am	Bingham Park A walk led by Glyn Mansell
Thursday 8 th June, 9.30 am	Conservation work morning
Sunday 11 th June, 1-6 pm	Fulwood Fete
Tuesday 27 th June, 9.30 am	Conservation work morning
Saturday 1 st July, 10 am	Woodland Trees A walk led by Ruth Morgan
Thursday 13 th July, 9.30 am	Conservation work morning
Tuesday 25 th July, 9.30 am	Conservation work morning
Wednesday 2 nd August, 7.30 pm Bents Green Methodist Church Hall	Open meeting and talk by Simon Ogden

Conservation work mornings: for details, please contact Dave Clegg orielclegg@aol.com or Lyndon Porter lyndon@the-porters.me.uk or visit our website FOPV.org.uk

Walks: These are ticket events – for details and registration, please visit our website walks page. Registration opens two weeks before the walk

The Committee:

Ann le Sage
Chair / talks
Lyndon Porter
Treasurer / walks
Glynis Jones
Secretary / newsletter
Dave Clegg
Conservation / planning
Les Greenwood
Newsletter
Mike Halliwell
Website / membership
Glyn Mansell
FD playground project
Rob Peck
Safety officer
David Young
Vice chair