

15 years ~ 1994-2010

Loose Leaf

spring 2010
newsletter

Pull out sections for
Volunteer Tasks and
Crawley Health Walks.



Notes from the Potting Shed

Well, that was certainly a proper winter, wasn't it! I have to say I quite enjoyed it and not just the making of snowmen. By the time you read this we should hopefully be getting into spring, with daffodils in bloom and birds beginning to nest. But I need to be careful what I write though, because in the last newsletter I wrote that we rarely had to cancel tasks...but the snow and ice forced us to cancel a couple of tasks, because of the difficulties of travel to the sites.

As I write this, Spring is just around the corner. I seem to be hearing great tits singing everywhere I go, snowdrops are out and the first hazel catkins are showing brilliant yellow again the leafless trees. As always we have a packed programme of volunteer tasks and events so come out and welcome the spring! There will soon be bluebells and wood anemones, birds nesting and leaves on the trees.

We're a bit thin on the ground here, with Huw gone to pastures new, and Barry off on paternity leave. More of this later on. But I would like to welcome Kevin into his new role as Project Officer – it can't come a day too soon!

Finally I'd like to take the chance to promote our blog, which is a record of our tasks, site visits and the nature on our doorsteps. It is another way to try and get people to appreciate, enjoy and get involved with their local environment, and to show what an interesting place we live in.



The address is <http://gatwickgreenspace.blogspot.com/> and there is also a link from our website.

Regards,

Pete, Kevin, Barry and Tom



Task Update



We began the last programme on Bonfire night at St Leonard's forest working with Mike Funnell. The on-going work in a distant corner of the forest has seen a huge area of Rhododendron Ponticum cleared to allow the re-generation of native flora. This was followed by the annual volunteers' "jolly" which this year was held at Woods Mill, the headquarters of the Sussex Wildlife Trust. Steve Tillman, one of the Trust's rangers, took us on an excellent guided walk around the reserve pointing out historical features and highlighting the impact of the Trust's grazing scheme. The walk was followed by a fine pub lunch in Henfield which was thoroughly enjoyed by all!

A corporate group from ScotiaGas Network joined the regulars to continue the glade creation in Glover's Wood, and a group from The Mileage Company lent a hand clearing vegetation and litter picking at one of the sites

we work on in Horley, Riverside Park. Despite the wet conditions we returned to Waterlea in Crawley to coppice willow and start thinning out the reed mace from the small ponds. Despite its very urban setting, Waterlea is a delightful site and a sharp eye here can spot roe deer and kingfisher

The Christmas tasks at St Leonard's and Edolphs Copse were a great way to end the year and enjoy a fire, baked potatoes and a good chat....

On a personal note, by the time you read this I will be settling into my new role within the Wildlife Trust as Access to Nature Officer based in Brighton. I would like to say a massive thank you to all of the volunteers I have worked with over the last couple of years for your hard work and dedication to local conservation. I look forward to Pete keeping me up to speed with any gossip or scandal and am sure our paths will cross again sometime in the future. *Huw*



In the New Year, the snow hampered our work and we had to cancel a couple of tasks, but we did have a good day with a bonfire of rhododendron, and more jacket spuds to reward those who came out. *"That was the best baked potato I have ever had"* quote from a satisfied volunteer!

We have also been back to Dorking to work on the site of the mausoleum and to Hammonds Copse for a little light coppicing. Our task work changes a little in the spring as we have to avoid disturbing nesting birds, but there is still plenty to do!

New Faces

Hi everyone! My name is Kevin Lerwill and as you may probably know by now, I am stepping into Huw's very smelly and muddy boots as from the 1st of March 2010 after his successful move to Brighton.

For the last 18 months, I have worked as the Volunteer Coordinator in the Horsham District on behalf of Sussex Wildlife Trust, (but working closely with both the Parks and Countryside Departments of Horsham District Council). My main task was to give practical support to the smaller local community groups, as well as offer advice and provide tasks for the volunteers on Council owned sites. My other main role was to support the work of Horsham Green Gym, which meets every Tuesday and is the second largest conservation volunteer group in south east England and works successfully on local authority and private land across the District.

Previously, I was a Countryside Warden between 2006 to 2009. Before that, I worked in the travel industry for 10 years, where I was lucky enough to visit many beautiful countries, including Kenya, Tanzania, Egypt, Jordan, Dubai, The Seychelles, Mauritius, India, The Maldives, Sri Lanka and South Africa (and enjoyed many wonderful safaris along the way). I have also worked on a number of



farms in New Zealand, where I experienced everything from sheep farming to Kiwi fruit growing and skydiving to Scuba diving!

I was also in the Royal Logistic Corps for five years after I left school, but I have always been an "outdoors" person at heart and am passionate about wildlife conservation both on a local, as well as a global level, and with your help, hopefully we can continue to improve the green spaces in your area soon... So see you there!



Here's a shot of Huw, with his daughter Poppy, born on the 4th January, and weighing in at just under 6lb.

Finally Barry has also become a first-time father, to Abigail, born on 1st February. Sorry, no photos yet!



Crawley Health Walks



YOUR FIRST STEP TO A HEALTHIER FUTURE *March-June 2010*



Walking is a great form of exercise, regardless of how fit or how old you are. Health Walks are led by trained staff or volunteers. Walking as part of a group takes away any fear of getting lost and is very sociable – we walk and talk!

This easy, gentle and safe exercise can help reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes, high blood pressure, bowel cancer, Alzheimer's disease, osteoporosis, arthritis and stress.

The health walks are graded:

Level 1

Suitable for the very unfit, those recovering from illness, accident or operation and walkers with limited stamina. No stiles on these walks.

Level 2

Some uneven ground and inclines on the route. Usually walk for about an hour, covering 2-3 miles.

Level 3

Could involve steep inclines, stiles & rutted terrain. Walking for at least an hour and a minimum of 3 miles.

For all walks: a sensible pair of trainers or shoes (preferably lace-ups) are advisable. The level 2 and 3 walks will be wet and muddy and you may find a pair of walking boots useful, especially in winter.

Please contact Barry on 01293 550730 / barrywildish@sussexwt.org.uk with any queries.

LEVEL 1 WALKS

Broadfield Stream

10.00am Wednesdays. Meet at the recycling Centre car-park, Broadfield Barton shops, Crawley. Buses 1, 10, & 20 call at the shops. Please join Martin and Katie for a cuppa in the community centre after.

Cherry Lane, Langley Green

10.45am Wednesdays at Cherry Lane Recreation Field, Langley Green. The 4 & 5 buses run along the nearby Martyrs Avenue.

Goffs Park

10.30am Tuesdays at Goffs Park, Horsham Road, close to centre of town. The 23 & 24 buses stop just along from the carpark. Join Jayne from the free car-park by the level crossing.

Maidenbower - New Walk!!

Meeting at the gym, Oriel High School, Maidenbower Lane, start 10.30 every Friday. Please pop along and support Mark and Hannah. The 100 bus goes past the school.

LEVEL 2 WALKS – ALL START AT 9-30

The Langley Green walk is on **every Wednesday**. For directions see above. The Tuesday walk alternates between Buchan Country Park and Tilgate Park. For Buchan Park, off Horsham Road, meet at the Countryside Centre. Nearest buses 1,10, 23, 24, 200.

***** Tilgate Park meeting point has changed due to works to lake/dam. Please meet at the carpark on Gainsborough Road, off Titmus Drive**** Nearest bus 2,3,73.*

March

Tues 2nd – Tilgate Park

Tues 9th – Buchan Park

Tues 16th – Tilgate Park

Tues 23rd – Buchan Park

Tues 30th – Tilgate Park

April

Tues 6th – Buchan Park

Tues 13th – Tilgate Park

Tues 20th – Buchan Park

Tues 27th – Tilgate Park

May

Tues 4th – Buchan Park

Tues 11th – Tilgate Park

Tues 18th – Buchan Park

Tues 25th – Tilgate Park

June

Tues 1st – Buchan Park

Tues 8th – Tilgate Park

Tues 15th – Buchan Park

Tues 22nd – Tilgate Park

Tues 29th – Buchan Park

cont. on p11



Volunteer Task Programme

THE VEHICLE LEAVES TILGATE PARK FOR SITE AT 9.30AM. PLEASE RING THE DAY BEFORE IF YOU WANT A LIFT, OR MEET ON SITE FROM 10.00 AM ONWARDS. ON THE DAY PLEASE RING 07788 101544 OR 0777 5907492.



Spring task

March

Thurs 4th – Edolph’s Copse – Finishing off glade creation in this Local Nature Reserve. Meet at the main entrance off Stan Hill Road, Charlwood TQ 234 422

Wed 10th – Chart Park, Dorking

– Laurel clearance around the mausoleum!. Meet at entrance to woods off of A24. Turn right when heading north up A24, just past Chart Lane South, but before Dorking Golf Club. TQ175 485

Thurs 18th – Owlbeech Woods –

birch/holly removal. Meet at the car park by the playground at the end of Owlbeech Way, off South Holmes Road, Horsham TQ197 316

Wed 24th – Buchan Country Park

– heathland management. Meet at Buchan Park car park, off the Horsham Road, between Crawley and Horsham TQ 246 347

Sun 28th – St Leonard’s Forest –

heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger’s lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

April

Thurs 1st Glovers Wood - Coppicing to create glades. Meet at the end of Glovers Road, off Russ Hill Road, Charlwood TQ 237 410

Wed. 10th Chart Park, Dorking – Laurel clearance around the mausoleum! Meet at entrance to woods off of A24. Turn right when heading north up A24, just past Chart Lane South, but before Dorking Golf Club. TQ175 485

Thurs 15th Owlbeech Woods – birch/ holly removal. Meet at the car park by the playground at the end of Owlbeech Way, off South Holmes Road, Horsham TQ197 316

Wed. 21st Buchan Country Park – heathland management. Meet at Buchan Park car park, off the Horsham Road, between Crawley and Horsham TQ 246 347

Sun 25th St Leonard's Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger's lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Thurs 29th Glovers Wood – Bluebell Walk – a chance to reflect on and enjoy our past works Meet at the end of Glovers Road, off Russ Hill Road, Charlwood TQ237 410.



May

Wed 5th Tilgate Forest – birch clearing on the heathland. Meeting point to be advised, due to current forestry works.

Thurs 13th Buchan Country Park – heathland management. Meet at Buchan Park car park, off the Horsham Road, between Crawley and Horsham TQ 246 347

Wed 19th Wed 5th Tilgate Forest – birch clearing on the heathland. Meeting point to be advised, due to current forestry works.

Sun 23rd St Leonard's Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger's lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Thurs 27th Gatwick Environment Centre – Tree thinning. Meet at the Thames Water entrance off Radford Road, Tinsley Green, Crawley TQ293 401



June

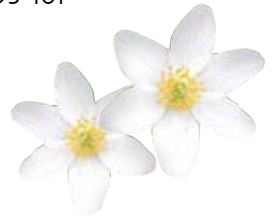
Wed 2nd & Thurs 10th Maidenbower pond – Step building up to the Worth Way. Meet at the entrance to the pond, off Billinton Drive, Maidenbower, Crawley

Wed 16th Betchwood Park, Dorking – Himalayan Balsam pulling. Meet at the first left off Punchbowl Lane opposite Ladyegate Road, Dorking TQ177 496

Thurs 24th Buchan Country Park – heathland management. Meet at Buchan Park car park, off the Horsham Road, between Crawley and Horsham TQ 246 347

Sun 27th June St Leonard's Forest – heathland maintenance. Meet at the ranger's lodge on the bridleway south of Forest Road, Colgate TQ221 324

Wed 30th Gatwick Environment Centre – Tree thinning. Meet at the Thames Water entrance off Radford Road, Crawley TQ293 401



New to us?

Tasks start at 10am and usually end around 4.00pm, but some of our volunteers come out for just the morning.

You need to wear clothes suitable for the weather, and sturdy footwear.

Drinks and biscuits are provided but do bring a packed lunch if you plan to stay out all day.

We provide all tools and safety

equipment and show you how to use all tools safely.

An adult must accompany children under 16 and you are advised to be up to date with your tetanus immunisation. A first aider will be available.

It is possible to arrange a lift from the office in Tilgate Park, Crawley, but please ring the office the day before task to confirm.



LEVEL 3 CIRCULAR WALKS – ALL LEVEL 3 WALKS START AT 10.00, UNLESS STATED

March

Fri. 5th – Faygate Foray (4.5 miles). Meet at the Holmbush pub. Please stop for a drink/snack afterwards.

Fri. 12th – Crawley Down circular (4 miles) From Rowfant car park, Wallage Lane, Opposite old Station and Colas.

Fri 19th – Rusper Ramble – (4.5 miles) Meet at the carpark in the High Street by the church and the Plough pub.

Sat. 20th – Lunch at the Lamb (8 miles) Walk to Lambs Green for a pub lunch. Meet Buchan Country Park car park. Booking essential on 01293 550730 by Wed 17th.

Fri. 26th – Ouse Valley outing (4.5 miles) Meet at Maidenbower recreation field car-park 9.30am or Ardingly reservoir carpark 10.00am (£1.00 to park)

April

Fri. 9th – Ifield Impetuous (4.5 miles) Meet behind the Plough Inn, Ifield.

Sat. 10th Tilgate Park and Forest (5 miles) Meet at main carpark (£3-00 parking) Part of the BBC's Thrillseeker events! (but don't be alarmed)

Fri. 16th – Staplefield to Nymans (4.5 miles) Meet at lay-by on west side of village green, opposite Jolly Tanners pub, B2114, Staplefield

Fri. 23rd – Slaugham stroll (3.5-5 miles) Meet at Slaugham Church in the centre of village. Please park sensibly.

Sat. 24th – Bluebell Walk (6 miles) Meet at Edolph's Copse woods, Stan Hill, Charlwood. Pub lunch towards end of walk so **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** for this popular walk on 01293 550730

Fri. 30th – Copthorne (5 miles) 10.00am Meet Copthorne Common Road, side road off Newtown Road.

May

Mon. 3rd – (May Day B.H) Balcombe towards Wakehurst. (4.5 miles) Meet lay-by on the B2036 south, just before you enter the village on the right.

Fri. 7th – North of Gatwick (4 miles) Park on the Povey Cross Road, heading away from the Longbridge roundabout and meet at the crossroads by the van hire centre

Thurs. 13th – Handcross Circular (4.5 miles) Meet at Red Lion pub, High Street Handcross.

Sat. 15th – Surrey Woods and Fields (5 miles) Meet at the 2nd entrance past the white house to Hammonds Copse Wood, Broad Lane, Newdigate TQ210444. Stop for a drink/ bite to eat towards the end of the walk. **BOOKING ESSENTIAL** on 01293 550730

Tues. 18th – Rowfant House (4 miles) Meet in carpark of Rowfant House, Wallage Lane. 5.00pm start followed by Crawley Citizens supper – **BOOKING ESSENTIAL BY TUES. 4TH MAY TO RESERVE TABLE - 01293 550730**

Fri. 21st – Faygate Foray (3.5-5 miles) meet at Holmbush Pub. Please stop for a beverage/snack after the walk





June

Fri. 4th – Slaugham Stroll (4 miles) Meet at the Red Lion pub, Handcross. Please stop for a beverage/snack after the walk.

Sat. 5th – Balcombe and beyond. (6 miles) Meet lay-by on the B2036 South, just before you enter the village on the right. Bring a packed lunch.

Sat. 12th – Horley Circular (9 miles) 9.30 am start. Meet at Riverside Park, off of the Crescent, Horley. Pub lunch so **BOOKING ESSENTIAL ON 01293 550730 BY WED 10TH**

Fri. 18th – Ruser Ramble – (4.5 miles) Meet at the carpark in the High Street by the church and the Plough pub

Thurs. 24th – Worth Lodge Forest (4 miles) Meet at Maidenbower recreation ground, Maidenbower Drive at 1800hrs. Supper at Frogshole Inn on the way back. – **BOOKING ESSENTIAL BY FRI 18TH JUNE TO RESERVE TABLE - 01293 550730**



For more information please contact Barry on 01293 550730 or email barrywildish@sussexwt.org.uk Crawley Green Health Project is sponsored by:



Chances4Change is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and co-ordinated by NHS South East Coast in partnership with NHS South Central, The South East Regional Public Health Group, Care Services Improvement Partnership, South East England Development Agency, Any Council South East and South England South East.



LOTTERY FUNDED

Spring Flowers



Everyone seems to dislike February, the end of winter, when we have had enough of the cold and the wet. We all start looking forward to the spring, longer days, more sunshine and to be cheered up by the sight of the first spring flowers. While snowdrop, crocus and daffodil may be the first garden blooms, out in the parks and countryside, other plants are marking the turning of the year. Here's some to look out for in March.

Blackthorn



The thick, white blossom of blackthorn makes a strong contrast to its dark, spiny twigs. From a distance, a flowering blackthorn looks as though snow has fallen. Blackthorn blossom in unseasonably frosty weather is known as “a blackthorn winter”: bad news for farming folk but can indicate a good summer to come. A strong blossoming also bodes well for the sloe gin, come the autumn. The other common hedgerow bush, hawthorn, does not flower until April into May, so it an easy way to tell these two species apart.

Goat willow / sallow

These are the “pussy willows” whose silky, silver-grey catkin buds suddenly explode into a mass of golden stamens in March. Sallow or goat willow blossom doesn't just look lovely. The flowers are an important source of nectar for bees, early butterflies and moths, and other insects at a time when there are few alternatives available.

Hazel

These catkins have started to expand into golden tassels in order to release their pollen to the wind. The female part of the hazel plant, which catches the wind borne pollen, consists of a tiny red cone of red stigmas, but you have to look up close to see these.

Primrose

The primrose is traditionally the first flower of spring. It is the prima rosa, the first “rose”. Its creamy-yellow flowers are always a treat to find in a woodland or hedgerow, and I think so much nicer than the garish polyanthus the garden centres offer.

Danish Scurvy-grass

You may notice this insignificant plant if you are stuck in a traffic jam!. Originally a seaside plant, it has spread along the road network, as it can tolerate the salt put down in winter gritting. For a few weeks each spring it seems as though the road verges and central reservations have been dusted with pink and white icing sugar - so called because it could help ward off Scurvy, a condition caused by the lack of vitamin C which the plant contains.

Before the Flail

One of the joys of Forest School is that the children taking part learn to identify the resources they can harvest from the woodland setting. By following through the whole process from raw material to finished product the children develop a sense of empowerment and achievement. The materials could come from a Rhododendron for shelter building, or Silver Birch trees could be thinned from a dense clump to provide wood for whittling and making mallets. The children thus gain a working knowledge of the outdoor environment, interacting with it in a fun and practical way, while also learning to care for it. Not all of the resources we use are always available on site and also as part of the site management plan we are careful not to deplete its habitat value for wildlife, so some materials are gathered off-site.

For some time I have been looking for a simple basket design that I could incorporate into the Forest School programmes and after finding a book on hedgerow basketry this autumn, I began to look at hedgerows in a different way. With the leaves gone, long un-branched stems of Hazel, Dogwood, Willow, Dog Rose, Bramble and Ash, became visible in hedgerows along lanes and fields. With landowner permission and before the tractors with their flails removed this fantastic resource, I gathered bundles of straight stems up to 6ft in length with a pair of loppers. The bundles were then left in a damp and shady place for 2-3 weeks to season before the weaving began.

I have enjoyed several sessions spent leading groups through the stages of a simple basket weaving while sitting around a camp fire and



sharing stories.

Current holiday bushcraft activity days are run around Crawley and Horsham area at Tilgate Park, Buchan Country Park, Leechpool and Owlbeech woods.

Bushcraft for Children (8-14yrs)

- times are 10.00 – 15.00 or 16.00
- prices are always £15pp with light refreshments included
- April dates: 7th, 13th, 14th, 15th
- June 1st, 2nd, 3rd
- August 10th, 11th, 13th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 23rd

Bushcraft for Families (6+ yrs accompanied by parents unless overnight)

- Times are 10.00 – 14.00
- Prices are always £7.50pp with light refreshments included.
- April 6th / August 12th, 24th

If you would like to book a bushcraft day or know a school or community group that would be interested in developing a Forest Schools programme, please contact Tom on tomforward@sussexwt.org.uk, or 01293 550730.

Sussex Wildlife Trust



Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is part of the Sussex Wildlife Trust, one of 47 wildlife trusts in the UK. Since its formation in 1961 it has become the county's leading conservation organisation.

The aim of the Sussex Wildlife Trust is to conserve the Sussex landscape, wildlife and its habitats, and to use its knowledge and expertise to help the people of Sussex to enjoy, understand and take action to this end.

This work can be broadly defined under these five headings:

- **Enhancing the desire in people for a healthy, wildlife rich environment**
- **Leading the conservation agenda for Sussex**
- **Biodiversity monitoring and recording**
- **Promoting achievement of biodiversity targets by others**
- **Delivering progress towards biodiversity targets ourselves**

The Trust manages 3,500 acres of land in 32 nature reserves, which include some of the finest wild places in Sussex. Over 450 active

volunteers are involved in all aspects of the Trusts work and together work more than 6,500 days a year for the Trust.

Through its schools programme, and an extensive programme of courses and events the Trust reaches out to people beyond its reserves, to understand and respect the habitats and wildlife in Sussex.

In a campaigning role the Trust lobbies on all the major environmental issues that impact on life in Sussex. It works with local people, landowners, local and national bodies to achieve a better environment.

The Trust is also an important information centre for habitat, wildlife and conservation issues. 'WildCall' is a telephone hotline for anyone with a query on conservation, from a concern about a planning application to what to do with an injured wild animal. Sick or injured animals cannot be taken in by the Trust but advice will be given on the best way to deal with any emergency. The Trust houses the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre which holds more than 2 million wildlife records across Sussex.

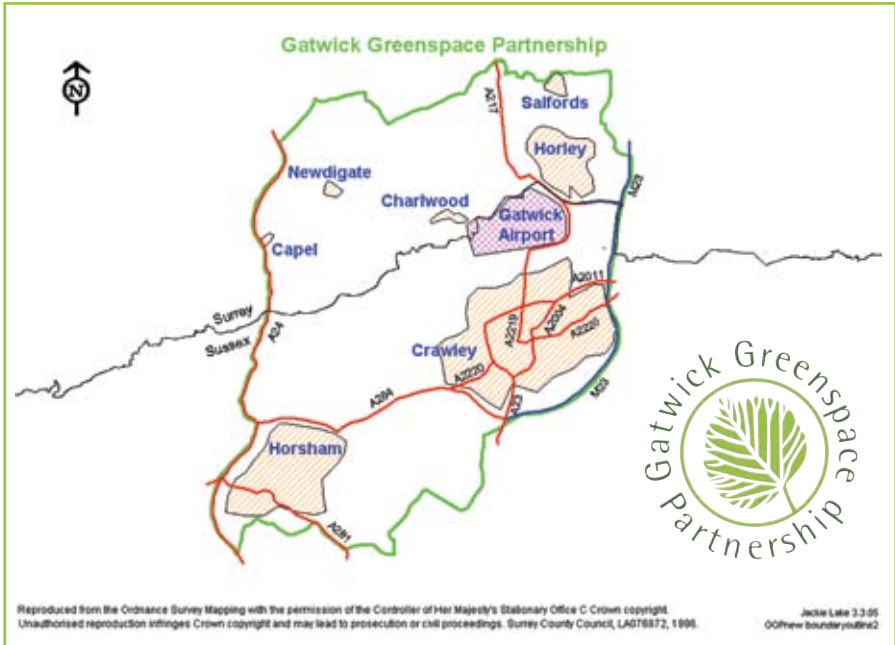
The Trust is a registered charity and needs your support to safeguard Sussex today and for future generations. Your support, by becoming a member of Sussex Wildlife Trust will make a real difference.

Please call 01273 492630, email sarahhince@sussexwt.org.uk or visit the website www.sussexwt.org.uk for more information and mention Gatwick Greenspace Partnership.

To receive the Trust's free monthly e-newsletter please visit www.sussexwt.org.uk



Gatwick Greenspace



For more information contact Pete & Huw:

Gatwick Greenspace Partnership, Tilgate Park, Crawley, RH10 5PQ

tel: 01293 550730 or 0777 590 7492

web: www.sussexwt.org.uk/community/page00001.htm

blog: <http://gatwickgreenspace.blogspot.com>

email: petecrawford@sussexwt.org.uk

The Gatwick Greenspace Partnership is managed by Sussex Wildlife Trust and supported by Surrey County Council, West Sussex County Council, Crawley Borough Council, Horsham District Council, Mole Valley District Council, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council, Horley Town Council & BAA Gatwick

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