



Chalkstream habitat & water meadow
restoration project

Cooper's Meadow, Marlborough



2008-2009



A project delivered by Action for the River Kennet, working with the Marlborough River Restoration Scheme partnership and funded by Kennet District Council, Thames Rivers Restoration Trust, Viridor Tax Credits, SurCaSE and the Marlborough Area Development Trust.

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Background

The River Kennet is one of England's finest chalk streams. It flows through the centre of Marlborough and is accessible for residents and visitors to enjoy. The urban river is essentially neglected and in a poor ecological state. This chalk stream habitat restoration project offers scope for both biodiversity improvement and increased amenity value for an area of public land.

State of river and meadow at start of project

The Kennet in central Marlborough was identified as a high priority for restoration in the Kennet Habitat Restoration Strategy, published by the Environment Agency in 2008. The 1999 fluvial audit of the River Kennet (Environment Agency) reported that: *the channel has been substantially modified and altered for flood defence or historical purposes (e.g. Mill construction), the channel is over-wide and devoid of sinuosity, with few signs of natural morphological features and limited signs of morphological recovery.*

The water meadow still shows evidence of the historic drain system, but the plant community is dominated by ruderal vegetation including nettle and bramble.

Project aims

- To improve the chalk stream habitat of the River Kennet in Marlborough Town Centre.
- To increase the biodiversity and wildlife value of Cooper's Meadow
- To address river bank erosion, reduce siltation and improve water quality.
- To advance the public understanding of chalk stream and water meadow habitats through the use of interpretive panels and community involvement in project work.

Project location

Cooper's Meadow, Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 1NG



Grid Ref: SU 189 689

Area of Meadow: approx 0.9 hectare, **Length of river:** approx. 500 metres

Project management

The project was managed by Charlotte Hitchmough on behalf of Action for the River Kennet and guided by the ARK committee and a steering group comprised of the Marlborough River Restoration Scheme partners (listed below).

Martin Cook, Marlborough Area Development Trust & St John's School

Richard Clarke, North Wessex Downs AONB

Richard Pitts, Marlborough Town Council

Bryan Castle, Marlborough Town Council

Martin Gibson (ARK)

Geoffrey Findlay (ARK)

Val Compton, Marlborough resident

Melvyn Lillywhite, Manton Residents Association

Tom Hayek, Water for Wildlife Officer, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Bill Jenman, Biodiversity Manager, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust

Principal contractors

Channel Design: Chris Booth, Riparian Revetments, Arelsford, Hampshire

Physical River Revetment: John Hounslow and Son, Mildenhall, Wiltshire

Groundwork and fencing: MJS Contracting, Mildenhall, Wiltshire

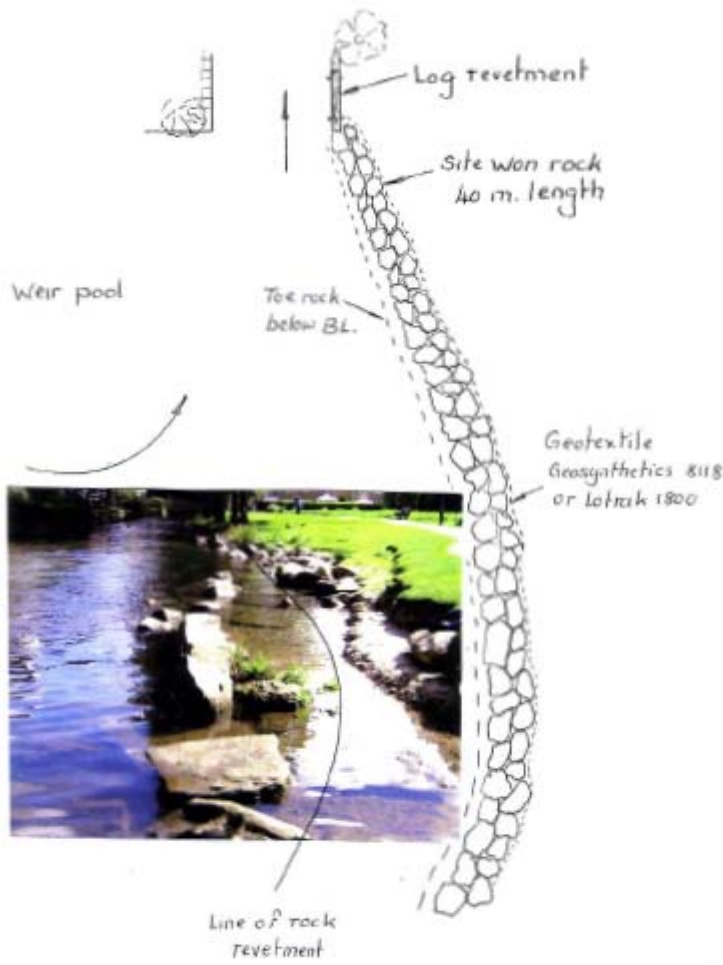
Tree surgery: David Oliver, Marlborough, Wiltshire

Additional advisers

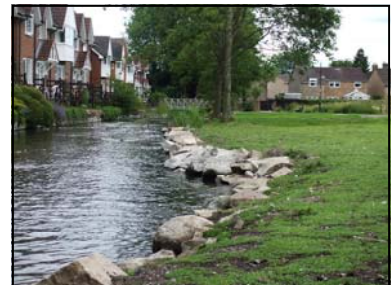
Flora Locale, Grazing Animal Partnership, Halcrow, Environment Agency.

Mill Pool

The mill pool banks had become severely eroded over time. The old sarsen stone revetment was no longer protecting the banks in high flow conditions and each storm event was destroying more bank and adding sediment to the river. The project repaired and re-aligned the mill pool revetment by reusing the sarsen stone on site together with sarsen stone imported from a local farm. The work required heavy machinery and an expert team of contractors. Bare soil was seeded with a resilient mixed seed mix, which has grown well and the new revetment held up well to the high flows in February 2009 and the foot traffic during the spring and summer since.



Erosion before project



Repaired mill pool revetment, Spring 2009

Above left: plan of new mill pool revetment;



Panorama of Mill Pool (before new revetment) with invertebrate surveyors working on right of

River from Mill Pool to Lady Bridge (also known as Rope Walk)

Before work commenced this section of river was over-shaded by tall hybrid poplars, the river profile was straight with laminar flows and no marginal or in-stream vegetation. The sarsen stone bank edging was eroded to varying degrees. The new bank structure was achieved using reclaimed sarsen stone and coir rolls which were backfilled and planted with marginal vegetation.

The project aimed to:

- Allow light to reach the river banks and bed by removing tree canopy
- Introduce variation in flow by creating channel sinuosity
- Repair eroded bank
- Plant marginal vegetation and create a flow regime to encourage instream vegetation to colonise naturally.

Tree work



August 2008



December 2008



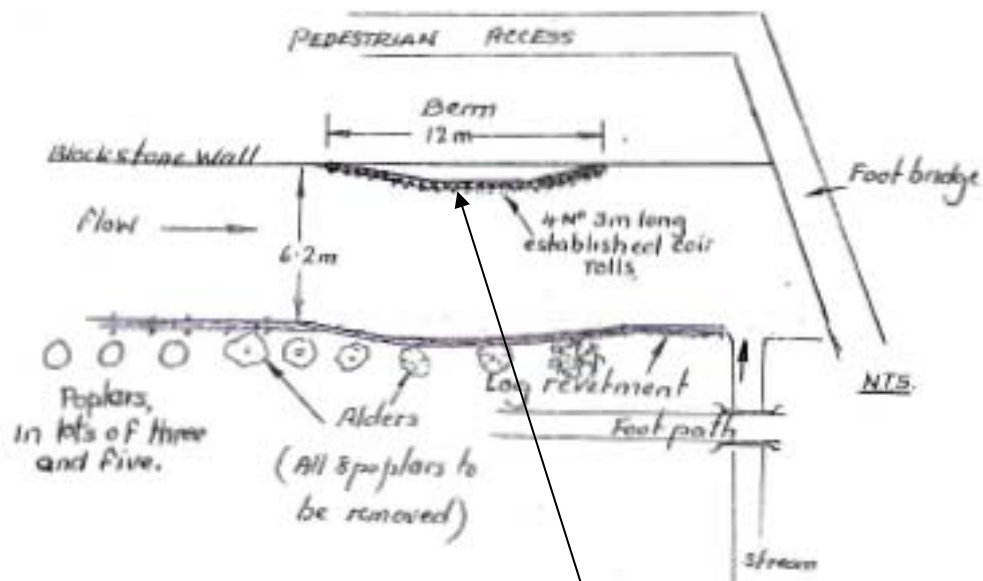
December 2008



Mr Horse, David Oliver and his felling team, December 2008

The first stage of project work began in December with removal of hybrid poplars and one alder, to allow more light to reach the river bed and banks. The work was done by local contractors David Oliver who used a heavy horse 'Mr Horse' to pull the timbers across the meadow. This attracted good local publicity for the project including an article with photo in the Marlborough Gazette & Herald and an interview on BBC Radio Wiltshire.

River from Mill Pool to Lady Bridge: revetment



Plan of berm. The original plan had specified two shorter berms, but the position of tree roots on the right bank and objection from local residents on the left bank dictated that one longer berm was a better option.



Above: working in January snow to create new sinuous bank profile constructed with coir roll



New berm constructed from 'as dug ballast with coir roll and additional planting. Photo taken in June 2009

The second stage of work to the River between the Mill Pool and Lady Bridge was to repair the bank using reclaimed sarsen stones where possible. New planted coir-roll was used to introduce sinuosity opposite the new berm, which was also constructed with coir roll. The bare soil was planted with a mix of marginal plants and grasses. Local river keeper John Hounslow built the new revetment with MJS Contracting undertaking the groundworks. Volunteer work parties planted the banks. In spring 2009 a coot used the new planting as a site for her nest.

Backstream from Mustard Seed Cafe inlet to Mill Pool

This back stream is fed by a sluice off the main river and a spring which rises within a metre from it. The backstream is heavily shaded and the banks eroded, mainly by ducks.

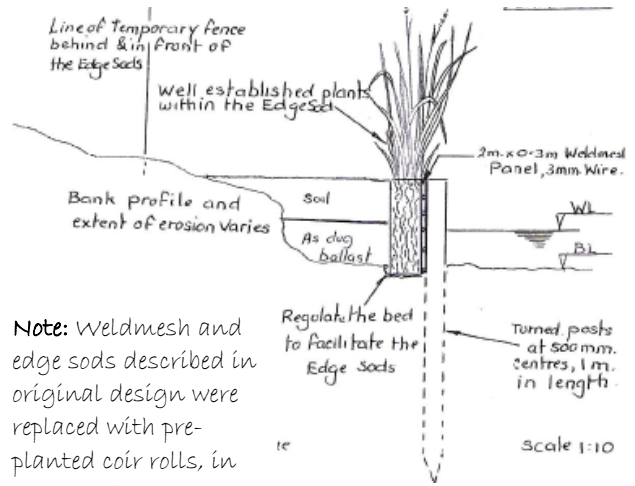
John Hounslow used the tree trunks from the felled poplars to narrow the stream and create a bank that would not be damaged by ducks. Volunteer work parties planted up the backfilled area with flag iris and canary reed grass foraged from downstream.



Photos: Top left back stream before project showing inlet sluice. Top right back stream with new log revetments in place (photo in high flow conditions so logs submerged). Above: St. John's School plant backfill behind new log revetments, Left: June 2009 showing backfill plants growing well.

Back stream around meadow

The back stream around the meadow had become over-widened with steep unvegetated banks and limited marginal vegetation. The streams was narrowed, made more sinuous and planted with a variety of marginal vegetation.



Note: Weldmesh and edge sods described in original design were replaced with pre-planted coir rolls, in response to EA advice



Top left: stream before, Top right, original plan, Bottom left: work in progress, Bottom right: stream after new channel and planting (May 2009).

Watermeadow and scrapes:

Coopers meadow was originally managed as a water meadow. It would have been deliberately flooded in the spring to warm the soil and irrigate the land to stimulate early grass growth for sheep to graze. The ditch system which drained water on and off the field is still visible, but the hatch structures have been removed and a tarmac footpath blocks the route of drains running off the meadow. To bring the water meadow back in to working order was beyond the scope of this project, but in an attempt to encourage more of the wetland plant associated with the habitat three of the scrapes were accentuated by digging them deeper, and one was dug into a deeper bowl shaped depression and planted with native marginal species.

Meadow management

To encourage a variety of grasses and wild flowers in the meadow the Town Council agreed to fence off an area of meadow and allow three Belted Galloway cattle to graze it in the Spring and Autumn. This conservation grazing is a tried and tested approach to restoring habitats. The cattle are on loan from local farmer Martin Gibson.

The fencing was constructed with simple post and wire to be visually unobtrusive and included kissing gates to enable access to the meadow and two five bar gates which will be locked 'open' when the meadow is empty.

The un-enclosed area of the meadow was seeded with a wild flower and grass seed mix and will be cut and carted at the end of each summer.

The local residents have been enthusiastic about the new additions to the site. A team of local people volunteered to become 'lookers', regularly checking the cattle's wellbeing. The cattle took around one month to graze off the spring grass and will return in the autumn to graze the summer growth leaving the meadow short for the winter.

The seeded section is growing well and will be 'cut and carted' in late summer after the wildflowers have set seed.



Three Belted Galloway cattle arriving in Cooper's Meadow, June 2009

Ducks and rats

In an effort to reduce the rat population a campaign was launched to explain the problems associated with over-feeding the ducks. A leaflet was distributed to all primary schools and sticker placed on streetlights and posts around the riverbank. The local paper ran a short piece and the local radio did a broadcast interview about the problems of rats.

The 'Keep wildlife wild' message had the support of the local town and district councils, the RSPB, RSPCA, Wildlife Trust and the Environment Agency.

The sticker and two sided leaflet are reproduced overleaf.

Keep wildlife wild...



The ducks on this river do not need feeding.

Ducks

There is enough natural food along the river corridor to sustain a healthy population of wild ducks.

Duck feeding causes these problems:

- unhealthy ducks,
- duck fighting,
- over crowding and unnatural behavior,
- healthy rats,
- damaged river banks,
- water pollution.



Please keep our riverbank rat-free. Don't leave food on the banks.

Rats

Rats live on the food people leave out for the ducks. Rats carry Weils disease (Leptospirosis) which can be fatal to humans and dogs.



Keep wildlife wild...

The ducks in Marlborough and on the River Kennet do not need feeding.

Ducks and swans live longer, healthier lives when they eat food growing naturally in their environment. We are asking you to make an informed choice knowing that you are helping the ducks and swans live natural lives in their natural habitat.



Many people enjoy feeding ducks, swans and other waterfowl. It feels good and brings the ducks closer for both children and adults to see. But duck feeding causes many problems for ducks, people and other wildlife

Wild ducks and swans need to eat green food and invertebrates that grow naturally in the river so they can maintain good health and enjoy a normal life span. Artificial foods like bread, cake, chips etc, which people feed to waterfowl, are poor substitutes for natural food.

Wild ducks fed on human foods can die from malnutrition, heart disease, liver problems and other health complications.

Regular feeding encourages waterfowl to gather in large numbers which leads to aggressive behaviour towards each other. Gangs of drakes harassing female ducks,

For all these reasons watching the wildlife, rather than feeding it may be a better option for everyone.

leading to the death of the females. Swans used to being fed by people have become aggressive towards them.

Scattering corn or bread on the ground means that the ducks eat from the same area where they defecate, this is not healthy. It encourages the spread of disease.

Uneaten food left for ducks attracts large numbers of rats, which become used to human activity and rely on duck food. Rats carry a disease called Leptospirosis or Weils Disease, which can fatal to humans and dogs. Rats have driven water voles out of the river in Marlborough.

Too many ducks living in a small area cause severe bank erosion as they scramble in and out of the water. This damages the habitat for other wildlife and is very expensive to repair.



Keep wildlife wild...

Volunteers

The project's success relied heavily on the active involvement of volunteers. Students from St. John's Community College and Marlborough College regularly gave their time and energy to clean up the site, construct new revetments and plant seeds and flowers.

A community open day was held in March 2009. More than 50 people turned up to help plant around 1,000 plants around the river bank. The open day was a great opportunity to explain the wider aims of the project to people and generated good local radio publicity.

Community involvement will continue with the 'lookers' taking care of the cattle when they are on site.

Volunteers have also been conducting monthly invertebrate samples and Marlborough College geography department have taken transects of the river and noted its profile to monitor changes as a result of the project.



Below top: volunteers taking a well-earned lunch break at the open day in March 2009. Below bottom: St John's Students with bags of litter collected on site in November 2008.

Right top: planting foraged plants, Right centre: constructing hazel faggots, Right bottom: planting the 'scrape'.



Publicity

The project generated good local publicity, with the Gazette and Herald in particular running several stories over the duration of the project. The local 'Greyhound' newsletter, which is distributed to every household in Marlborough also ran two stories about the work.

BBC Wiltshire Radio broadcast live interviews when the tree work was going on, during the open day and the day that the cows were released.

The following pages show a variety of press generated by the project.

COMMUNITY groups are celebrating after being doo-
ned by Kennet District Council em-
arked on a massive £2.2 mil-
lion giveaway.

Village halls, youth groups, sports
facilities, heritage facilities, play
areas are among the projects
awarded money by Kennet. Without
the money the projects would have
taken years to progress and some
may not have happened at all.

In Pewsey £100,000 is being offered
to the Heritage Centre, although that
grant has strings attached.

Centre manager Mike Asbury
welcomed news of the grant but said:
"It is conditional on the development
of Whatley's Yard going ahead."

The heritage centre is housed in
part of the former Whatley's foundry
and engineering complex that is due
to be redeveloped with housing and
other projects including a library.

It is understood that negotiations
for the scheme to go ahead are
approaching the signing stage.

Kennet is giving £30,000 to Pewsey
Carnival Committee towards the
carnival storage building at the
Salisbury Road Business Park.

Carnival chairman Richard Giles
said: "The shell of the building is up
and this money would be used for
further equipping and to provide
mezzanine floors to give extra
storage space at first floor level."

He said the storage facility would
be available to all of the
organisations in the Pewsey Vale.

The plan for a community link
building between Pewsey Vale
School and the leisure centre is to
receive £50,000 towards its initial

By Nigel Kerton
nkerton@news.wilts.co.uk

feasibility study. The very popular
new PACT Centre in the centre of
Pewsey, which provides computer
training and has a dedicated youth
area and an arts gallery, is to receive
£20,000.

The Bouverie Hall is to get a
£40,000 grant that will be used largely
to refurbish its kitchen.

The village's Methodist Church
will receive £25,000 while the Jones
Mill nature reserve on the edge of
Pewsey is getting £30,000.

Many other communities across
the district will enjoy the largesse as
Kennet dissipates its capital before
being swallowed up by the new
Wiltshire unitary authority.

Marlborough Town Council is to
receive £50,000 towards creating a
visitor centre in the basement of the
town hall.

Action for the River Kennet (ARK)
gets £23,000 towards its river
improvement schemes.

The 2nd Marlborough Scouts get
£18,000 towards the upkeep of their
George Lane hall.

Broad Hinton gets one of the
largest single grants of £250,000
towards rebuilding its village hall;
Enford gets £145,000 towards its
village hall; East Grafton village hall
gets £65,000 towards refurbishment;
Ramsbury Memorial Hall gets
£70,000 and the Kennet Valley Hall,
Lockeridge, receives £17,000.

Aldbourne Youth Council is to
receive £18,000 towards its
innovative computer centre.



SPLASHING OUT: Ian Finlayson, Charlie Gauntlett, Candia Nicol and Felix Read celebrate the
£23,000 grant to the Action For River Kennet project in Marlborough PICTURE BY DIANE VOSE

Town's ancient water meadow is to be given a new lease of life

River work to start

A HISTORIC water meadow in Marlborough where cattle and sheep once grazed will be the next phase of improving the River Kennet.

Local groups and councils are backing the river restoration scheme aimed at returning the Kennet to a fast flowing stream.

Involved in the scheme are Action for the River Kennet, Marlborough Area Development Trust, Marlborough Town Council, Kennet District Council, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Manton Residents Association.

Already the results of work upstream at Manton and the stretch between the Priory Gardens and George Lane car park can be seen.

Now the restoration team is turning its attention to the river between Coopers Meadow and Town Mill retirement homes.

Charlotte Hitchmough from ARK is one of the leaders of the project to revitalise the River Kennet.

By Nigel Kerton

nkerton@gazetteandherald.co.uk

The number of trees lining the river bank through Cooper's Meadow is to be reduced by taking out all of the over-mature poplars Mrs Hitchmough said.

Large stones will be used to redefine the edge of the stream and talks are taking place between the landowners responsible for the sluice gates so they can be set so that water flows around the meadow.

Landscape designers Zinnia Mulford and Henry Swanzy have been commissioned to work out a scheme for restoring Coopers Meadow as a water meadow with plants and wild flowers that were abundant when it was grazed.

The sluices enabled the field to be flooded in the spring encouraging early grass growth for the animals.

Mrs Hitchmough said that when work starts of the riverbank volunteer helpers would be needed.



HELPING THE FLOW: Landscape designers Zinnia Mulford, (left) and Henry Swanzy with Charlotte Hitchmough from Action for the River Kennet

News IN BRIEF

Golden roses to be replaced

MARLBOROUGH: Some of the 80 Heart of Gold roses planted by the Rotary Club in a special bed in the Priory Gardens have died and will be replaced with plants of the same variety.

Harvest service

WINTERBOURNE BASSETT: Harvest festival will be celebrated at St Katherine and St Peter Church on Sunday October 19 at 11am.

Time to remember

AVEBURY: there will be an All Soul's Day service in St James' Church on Monday November 3, 7pm, at which prayers will be said for those who have died over the past 12 months.

Autumn events

LOCKERIDGE: There will be a harvest supper in Kennet Valley Hall on Saturday October 18 at 7.30pm and a skittles night on October 25. Tickets from (01672) 861265.

Recycling time

FYFIELD: Skips for recycling cardboard and plastics will be at the car park at priest Acre on Friday October 31 10am-12.30pm.

All Cannings

All Saint's Church

Despite the snow on Wednesday last, many of the regulars attended the monthly coffee morning held at Mrs Pauline Belotti's and raised a good sum for church funds from both the raffle and bring and buy. On March 4 the coffee morning will be at 71 Townsend, the home of Jill and Julie.

Mothers' Union

The January meeting was held in All Cannings' village hall when Liz Overthrow spoke about the Women's World Day of Prayer. Members were then shown slides illustrating life in Papua New Guinea.

Primary School

The school will be closed for a training day tomorrow and for the following week, which is half term. This evening a Valentine disco takes place at the school. There is another appeal for parents on the school run to park considerately in the school car park.

Pre school

The jumble sale on January 24 raised £150 towards much needed funds. Belinda Mead (01380)860348

Bishop's Cannings

School walk raises nearly £2,000

The sponsored walk on November 28 raised an amazing £1,972, which will be used to buy new books for the school library. Each class has £250 to spend and ordering is now underway. The school's SIP (School

Messing around in the river



MUD, MUD, GLORIOUS MUD: Max Tomkin, 15, and Jamie Pickford plant flag frises beside the River Kennet

IT IS not the ideal time of years for messing about in the river but that has not deterred students from St John's School working in the near freezing water of the Kennet at Marlborough.

Year 10 volunteers from St John's School and Community College estab-

lished over 100 plants around the newly restored river bank at Cooper's Meadow last Thursday.

The 20 diploma course students are helping Action for the River Kennet restore wildlife habitats in the town centre.

Project leader Charlotte

Hitchmough said: "The plants were foraged from a riverbank site downstream and moved to Cooper's Meadow where they will provide a colourful addition to the meadow and valuable habitat for creatures like water vole and dragonfly."

Staff member Sian

take us? at 7.30pm at the Crown Centre. Do join us. Friends of Southbrook Surgery January 100 Club

Winners: £20 Mr P Hough, £10 Mr B Barrett, £7.50 Mr B Lewis, £5 Mr W McGull, Mr E Giles, Mrs S Holloway, Mrs I Hawkins, Mr C Clifford.

Rowde

St Matthews Church

A sketch illustrating the meaning of Candlemas was performed at the family service by Andrew Eyles, Maria Eyles, Christine Eyles, Chris Wheeler and Jonathan Hiscox. The readings were given by Morag Taylor and Reece Midgeley. The prayers were read by Jasmine Atwood. Josie and Louisa Gee did the collection.

Coffee morning

There will be a coffee morning with cakes, raffle and bring and buy in aid of church funds in the church on February 21 from 10am to noon.

Churchyard

Because of the very cold weather, the two churchyard taps will remain turned off.

Village hall

Despite the bad weather there was a good attendance at the AGM of the village hall on February 3.

Chairman, Mr B Barrett, said in his report that the games room had during the past year been totally refurbished and two new windows installed in the kitchen. It is hoped when funds become available to continue replacing windows

and The Brewery Inn in Seend Cleve. All proceeds will be donated to local organisations and/or good causes.

Mary Hardstaff (01380) 828458

Pewsey

Pewsey Vale Gardening Club

The meeting on February 3 was cancelled due to the weather. The next meeting will be on March 3 when the speaker will be the very popular Karen Johnstone talking about 'The Late Geoff Hamilton's Garden'. For all general enquiries about the club, call (01672) 563301.

Pewsey Farmers Market

You've still got time to get along to the farmers' market in the Bouverie Hall which closes at noon today.

Quiz evening

Last week's quiz which was cancelled due to the weather will be re-organised for early next month. Watch this space for the new date.

Fair Trade

The Bishop of Ramsbury would like to invite representatives to join him in a celebration of Fair Trade in Devizes on February 21 in the Town Hall from 10am to 3.30pm.

It will be opened by the Mayor of Devizes and the Bishop and there will be topical speakers. Fair Trade stalls, a cafe and wine bar both serving Fair Trade products and also a service of celebration of Fair Trade to be held at St John's in Devizes at 11am.

Bridge Club

Whether a learner or an

sarahbeaven@aol.com

Sarah Beaven (01380) 721596

received, and the proceeds of the film is donated to the Help the Heroes charity.

arrangements with some unusual containers. Sue King gave the vote of

Community News

Collingbournes

Collingbournes and Everleigh Gardening Club

At the annual general meeting Rita Pringle was elected to fill a vacancy on the committee, other members and officers remaining the same.

Speaker Christine Brewster gave a talk on willow work in the garden including wigwams for sweet peas and willow baskets and was warmly thanked by chairman Pam Haverson. Refreshments concluded the meeting.

On February 26, the meeting will be at Collingbourne Ducis Village Hall at 7.30pm when Keith Boxall will talk on Delphiniums.

Church tea party
On Wednesday last the church ladies and friends met at St Andrew's church for a social afternoon.

Pamela Cogdell
(01264) 850601

Hungerford

Historical Association

On January 21 at the Corn Exchange, local historian David Strubbs talked about a sabbatical in which he hiked 630 miles around the South West Coastal Path, passing memorials such as that of the young and inexperienced crew of a Wellington bomber whose navigation failed them during Second World War.

Pewsey

Quiz evening

Students wade into thick of it



CLEAR UP: St John's students have been picking up rubbish from the River Kennet and restoring water meadows

STUDENTS from St John's School have been helping restore the river and water meadows in Coopers Meadow, Marlborough.

The Year 10 students removed six bin bags full of litter, including broken glass and plastic, said Charlotte Hitchmough from Action For The River

Kennet, which is spearheading a project to re-talise the river between Coopers Meadow and the Town Mill retirement homes.

Another group of students made hazel faggots that will be used to help re-define the banks of the river.

Teacher Sian Meakin said: "This project is a great way for our students to get experience of doing real outdoor work. We are delighted to have St John's students involved."

The students will be planting wild flowers, building more hazel faggots and seeding grass.

Great Cheverell

Bookmark

2007 Booker Prize winner Anne Enright's *The*

Gathering received a poor review from members at the January meeting, although Foolish Mortals by Jennifer Johnson was better liked.

In the absence of Hild Marrow due to an operation, it was agreed to skip a month and read the March selection, *Tales from the*

Town of Widows by James Canon and *Small Island* by Andrea Levy, for February's session. Get well soon wishes were sent to Hild.

Market Lavington

LADS

Lavington Amateur

Dramatic Society would like to apologise for the disappointment caused in the postponement of the production of *Snow White* caused by putting in a late application for the Entertainment Licence.

Although everything was ready, without the license no performance could be given

The production will be staged on March 13 and 14, which is the first the full cast will be available. All tickets sold will be fully refunded or replaced with tickets for the March performance.

Parish Magazine

The editor and printers would like to apologise for the late delivery of the magazine. This is because they have delayed printing for a piece from the

section set aside for corrections to be cut out and glued over the few errors that remain.

Kennet Quilters

The quilters meet in the Community Hall from 2pm to 4pm on Monday when they will be looking at ways of using tonality in quilting.

Colin Osborn
(01380) 81245

North Wiltshire

Alzheimer's Society needs help

One of the most important fund-raisers is Bill Stephen's charity golf day at Kendleshire Golf Club, which last year raised £3,427.

But, with Bill retiring as organiser, the branch is looking for someone to take over the event which is used to help people with dementia and their carers.

Branch manager Sarah Mings is very grateful to Bill for all the help he has given and said: "I wonder if there might be someone else in the golfing community prepared to take over where he left off. In these difficult times we need the support of our volunteers more than ever."

To join the Friends, or for help or advice, call (01249) 443469.

Caine

Caine Townswomen

At the November meeting, members, especially Sue Burchell, were thanked for organising the quiz night, which raised over £100.

tombs and refreshments.

Admission 20p.

Pewsey is entitled Can You

Be Rich And Have A Good

wonderful scenic

countryside and Wiltshire

Make a difference to Marlborough's Meadow

Cooper's Meadow Open Day

Sunday 22nd February 2009

10am – 2pm

Help plant 700 native meadow and
riverside flowers

Please wear old clothes and gardening gloves



An art workshop for children (under the age of 8) will be held at the Corner House Children's Centre

Refreshments and equipment provided

Please register your interest by calling 01672 513672 or email: info@riverkennet.org



Marlborough Town Council



MADT
Marlborough Area Development Trust
"Working in, with and for the community"



Ribverside field becomes grazing land for restoration project

Good moos – cows are back in meadow

THE clock was turned back more than half a century when cows were released into a water meadow in the centre of Marlborough on Tuesday.

The trio of Belted Galloways will spend the next month grazing Coopers Meadow at the side of the River Kennet and just a stroll from the town centre shops.

The cows are being used to naturally graze the meadow to encourage the growth of wild flowers as part of the a river restoration scheme.

It is part of a wider project, too, to generally improve the river right through the town with completed stretches upstream at Manton and future plans to recreate better conditions on the chalk stream right through Marlborough and the Kennet Valley ei-

By Nigel Kerton

nkerton@gazetteandherald.co.uk

ther side of the town.

Action for the River Kennet has coordinated fundraising from sources including Kennet District Council, Thames River Restoration Trust and Viridor landfill tax credits to pay for work to restore the vitality of the river and its banks.

Farmer Martin Gibson from Mildenhall offered to let some of his herd of beef cattle graze the field and the two steers and one heifer will be in there for the next month and then be brought back at the end of the summer for another three or four weeks.

Charlotte Hitchmough from ARK said: "They haven't got names yet so if anybody has any suggestions we would like to hear from them."

Mr Cooper's wife, Rosemary, said: "Our son would never have thought he would ever see cows back in his great grandfather's meadow."

Mr Cooper said: "It is good to see cows back in this field because as far as I can remember the last time we had cattle in here was in the late 1950s or 1960s."



GRAZING: Cows in the meadow with herdsman Martin Gibson

Riverfly monitoring

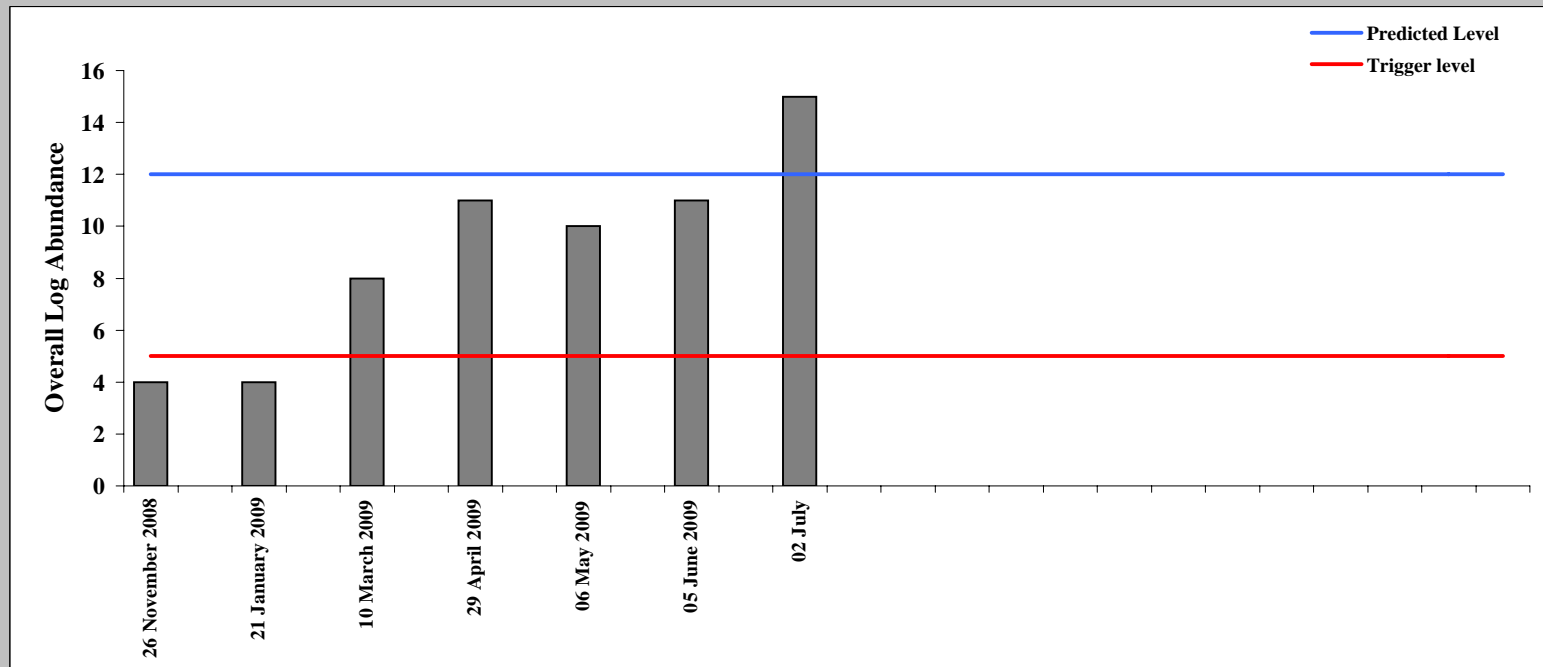
Two river fly monitoring sites were established, with surveys beginning before the work commenced in November 2008. The results show a positive trend of increasing diversity and abundance of invertebrate species.

The data from the main channel site are reproduced on the following page.



Angler's Invertebrate Monitoring Initiative

River Kennet Cooper's Meadow main channel



EA - Predicted level
EA - Trigger level

12
5

* Estimated number is optional

Date

	26 November 2008		21 January 2009		10 March 2009		29 April 2009		06 May 2009		05 June 2009		02 July	
Category	Estimated	Category	Estimated	Category	Estimated	Category	Estimated	Category	Estimated	Category	Estimated	Category	Estimated	
(A - D)	Number *	(A - D)	Number *	(A - D)	Number *	(A - D)	Number *	(A - D)	Number *	(A - D)	Number *	(A - D)	Number *	
Cased caddis	a	3	b	29	b	15	c	100	b	50	b	23	b	24
Caseless caddis	a	4			a	1	a	3	a	2	a	3	b	16
Mayfly (Ephemeridae)		0												
BWO (Ephemerellidae)		0			a	5	b	25	b	27	b	26	b	53
Flat bodied (Heptageniidae)		0												
Olives (Baetidae)		0			b	23	b	30	b	25	b	27	b	86
Stoneflies		0									a	2	c	101
Freshwater shrimp	b	30	b	10	b	500	c	300	c	400	c	1000	d	500

Target Groups:

Cased caddis

Caseless caddis

Mayfly (Ephemeridae)

BWO (Ephemerellidae)

Flat bodied (Heptageniidae)

Olives (Baetidae)

Stoneflies

Freshwater shrimp