

# Epping Forest Countrycare

## How to contact us

Is the District Councils countryside management service, which aims to maintain and enhance the natural environment for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

This is achieved by creating and maintaining habitats, improving public access and increasing awareness of our rural heritage.

Countrycare's team of five paid members of staff work with schools, volunteers, youth groups, tree wardens, wildlife organisations and national agencies, amongst others encouraging participation in practical environmental projects.

Operating across the whole of the Epping Forest District, Countrycare undertakes a wide range of community-based activities and coordinates a regular programme of practical conservation tasks. This includes the management of the Districts 9 Local Nature Reserves.

Countrycare is one of the Council's primary "enablers" and the service involves people of all ages and abilities in all aspects of its work. With a credible and proven track record for delivering quality projects over the last 20 years and an obvious public interest in the countryside, Countrycare is in the enviable position of being able to recruit and keep volunteer help. In 2005/06 Countrycare organised 121 practical project days involving 1,196 volunteer days. The service also coordinated over 30 educational events and walks.



**Countrycare Team Email:** [countrycare@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:countrycare@eppingforestdc.gov.uk)  
(01992) 788 203  
[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare)

**The Tree and Landscape team** deal with tree and landscape issues in connection with Planning applications; applications for works to trees within conservation areas; making and administering of Tree Preservation Orders; liaising with members of the public on tree issues

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**The Historic Buildings, Conservation Areas and Urban Design Team** deal with most matters relating to historic buildings and conservation areas, including grants, enhancement projects, building risk, repairs, enforcement, prosecutions and advice. They also advise on the design of new development, prepare planning and development briefs and design guidance leaflets.

**Paul Sutton** (01992) 564119 **Lucy Davis** (01992) 564068

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[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planning](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/planning)



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 **Epping Forest  
District Council**



Enhancing your environment  
Countryside and conservation news



Chigwell Row Nature Reserve  
Chigwell Row Wood Photographed  
by Peter Comber

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*Epping Forest District Council*

[www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk)



Welcome to the eleventh edition of **E**nhancing **Y**our **E**nvironment a quarterly round up of news from the Conservation and Environment Section of Planning Services at Epping Forest District Council.

In this autumn edition you will find articles on the district's built heritage in Epping as well as information on current planning issues. There is also a round up of all Countrycare's activities for the quarter including walks, talks and volunteer dates.



Tree Wardens Corner



Countrycare Volunteer Diary Dates



Volunteer Task Information



Reserves Focus – Roding Valley Meadows LNR



Elephants on Linder's Field!



News and Updates



Restoration work begins at Norton Heath Common



Local Planning at EFDC



Planning Policy Guidance 17



A short history of Bell Common



Dido of Epping Forest



## Tree Wardens Corner

What are Tree Wardens?

Tree Wardens are local people appointed by their local community group, residents association or parish council to gather information and to encourage practical projects relating to trees in their community. You do not need to be an expert as you will be provided with an "action pack" and training to give you the basic knowledge you will need. What is important is that you should genuinely care for trees and the environment.

In the Epping Forest District the Tree Warden programme is run by Epping Forest District Council on behalf of the Tree Council. The Tree Council's role is to improve the environment by encouraging tree planting and to gather knowledge and understanding about trees and their management.

We are always looking for new tree wardens and are especially keen to recruit new wardens to help with the veteran tree hunt. So if you are interested please contact Countrycare.

### Epping Forest Tree Warden AGM

28 November 2007

Civic Offices, Epping 7.30pm

#### Guest speaker

Dr Jeremy Dagley BSc PhD FBNA,  
Conservation Manager, City of London  
Epping Forest

"The Veteran Trees of Epping Forest -  
their management and ecology. "

Open to all - please contact  
Countrycare (details on back page)

## Dido of Hainault Forest

In the mid Nineteenth Century Hainault Forest was home to many gypsies, tramps and vagabonds. The most famous of these was Dido, where locally he was well known as a herbalist. He came to Chigwell Row in 1880, and set up camp in Hainault Forest.

Around the turn of the century Alice Clark (1890-1964) used to visit him with other local children. She said his camp was under a large oak tree to the left of Sheep Water, a well; and that he always wore a type of 'Fez' with a tassel on the top. (Victorian Smoking Cap?) She said they used to call him 'Dido Jones'; this may have been the local children's nickname for Dido, as there are no other known references to the 'Jones'.



He wasn't a gypsy though he lived a gypsy like existence. His reputation as a herbalist spread in the community and he was always in demand. Many of his remedies included 'cures' for whooping cough, measles, burns and liver complaints. He believed that 'the liver is the kitchen of the body, and if the kitchen is not in order then the whole house will be upset'. The sick would be visited, even those with contagious diseases such as diphtheria and scarlet fever, when others would stay away. Rare ferns collected from Loughton, were made into a 'green ointment' that he used for cuts and bruises, sprains, rheumatism and chilblains.

The story goes that one winter's day, the driver of the horse drawn bus that went from Lambourne to Woodford had chilblains so bad that he could not hold his reins. Dido's green ointment allegedly cured him in two days!

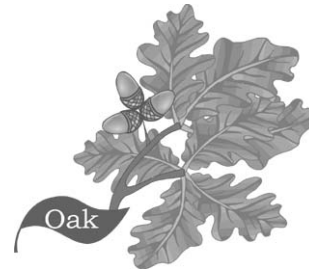
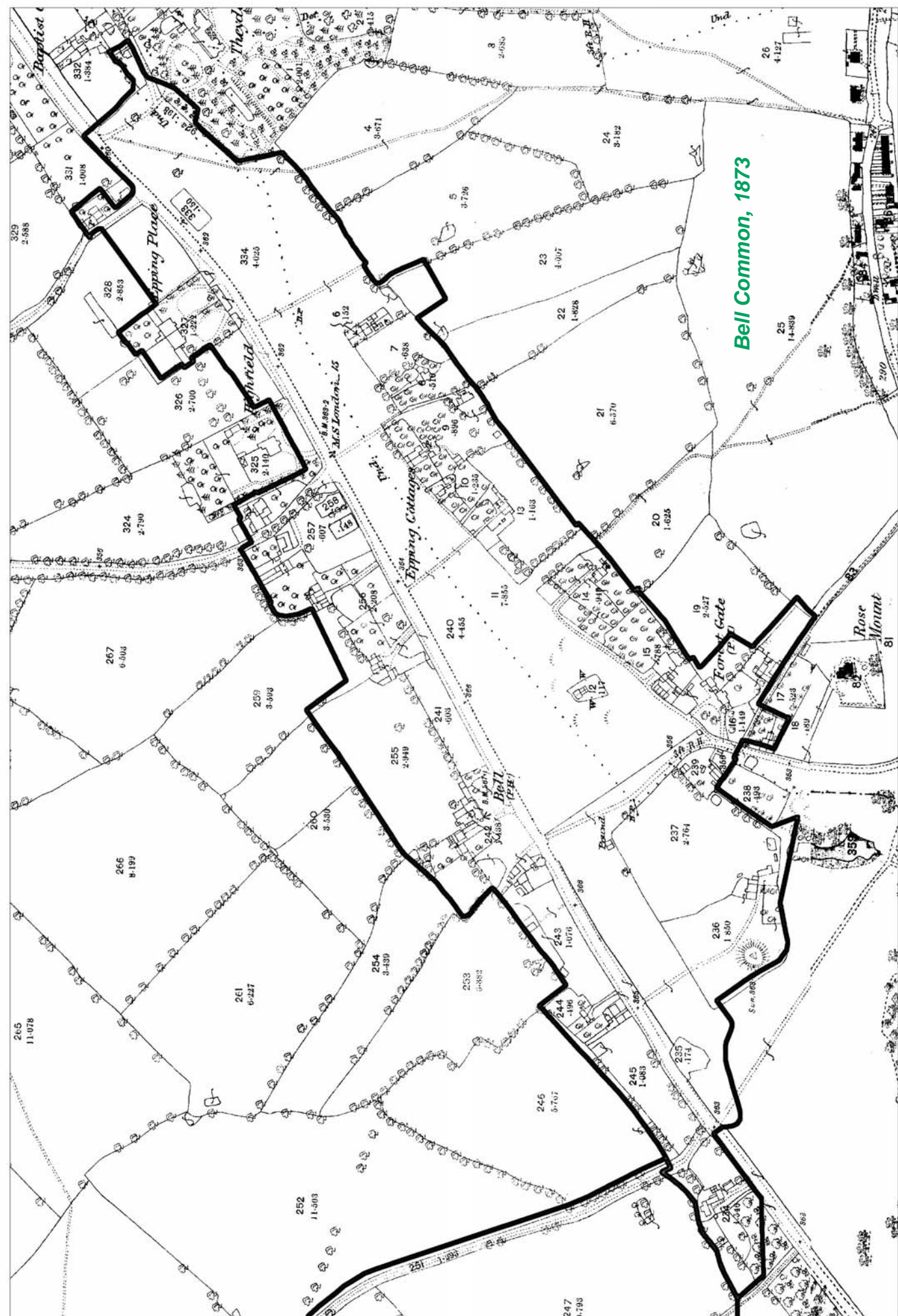
He was a bit of a rogue; he collected the leaves of Hawthorne and Blackthorn, and dried and sold them as Tea in Bunhill Row market in the East End. He also caught wild birds and sold them.

In 1905 he had to leave the forest, along with the gypsies and others, and lived in a field in Vicarage Lane. There was much speculation as to his former life; it was suggested he had been thwarted in love like the Queen from whom he took his name. After his death, his real name was revealed as William Bell, a London docker and part time fishmonger. From where he had obtained his herbalist skills no one knew.

By Peter Comber  
Epping Forest Tree Warden

### Quiz answers

1. Deracinate - a sixteenth century word meaning to pull or rip up by the roots thereby completely removing or eradicating the tree or bush.
2. Foxy timber - when the centre of an oak decays and turns reddish-brown it is said to be foxy or foxed.
3. Hardbeam - another word for hornbeam.
4. Dodder tree - another word for a pollarded tree.
5. Shank - another word for the trunk of a tree.



## Events and Diary Dates

### October 2007

Sunday 14	Swaines Green, Epping
Thursday 18	Cripsey Brook, Ongar
Thursday 25	Chigwell Row Wood LNR, Chigwell
Sunday 28	Fungus Foray – Chigwell Row Wood LNR

### November 2007

Thursday 1	Roding Valley Meadows LNR, Loughton
Saturday 3	Opening of 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition, Waltham Abbey Museum
Sunday 4	World's End Wood, Roydon.
Thursday 8 and Friday 9	Hedgelaying Course – Field Studies Council run by Peter Vaughan
Sunday 11	Swaines Green, Epping
Thursday 15	Linder's Field LNR, Buckhurst Hill
Wednesday 21	Start of National Tree Week (ends 2 December)
Thursday 22	Talk – Waltham Abbey Museum "50 Favourite Trees"
Sunday 25	Veteran tree hunt day
Wednesday 28	Epping Forest Tree Warden AGM, Civic Offices, Epping.
Thursday 29	Roughtalley's Wood LNR, North Weald

### December 2007

Thursday 6	Roding Valley Meadows LNR, Loughton
Sunday 9	Swaines Green, Epping
Sunday 9	Nazeing Scout Hut, Nazeing
Thursday 13	Thornwood Allotments, North Weald

### January 2008

Thursday 3	Swaines Green, Epping
Sunday 6	Swaines Green, Epping (joint project with EFCV)
Thursday 10	Roding Valley Meadows LNR, Loughton
Sunday 13	Swaines Green, Epping
Thursday 31	Home Mead LNR, Loughton

Above is just a small selection of the volunteer projects and events Countrycare will be running over the next four months. **Please note this programme may be subject to change. Please contact us to get the monthly update sheet to confirm details or visit the Countrycare website [www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/countrycare)**

Unless otherwise stated there will be a pick up from Loughton Tube Station at 9.30 am for all volunteer projects and we will aim to have you back there for 4.30 pm. Please bring a packed lunch, sturdy boots and plenty of enthusiasm. We will ply you with tea, coffee and biscuits to help keep your energy levels up!

## Volunteer Task Information

**Nazeing Scout Hut.** Working with the local scouts and guides your help is needed with the construction of a bridge and a hedge restoration project involving coppicing and planting. **Meet:** 10.00am Nazeing Scout Hut, Perry Hill **Grid Ref:** TL 401 055

**Cripsey Brook, Ongar.** After many years, numerous false starts and a lot of hard work by a number of people, work is finally to begin on Ongar's first Nature Reserve. The site itself is located to the south of the town on a thin strip of land running beside Cripsey Brook. Our partners, Ongar Town Council, have secured a 25 year lease for the land from Essex County Council and £17K in grant funding has been secured. Initial work will involve a major tidy up of the site (parts of which have been abandoned for 25 years.) This will involve a major rubbish and bramble clearance. Once this work is complete there will be further projects including tree planting and attempts to recreate a flood meadow. **Meet:** 10.00am – The Lorry Park, just off the bottom of the Ongar High Street on The Borough. **Grid Ref:** TL 551 026



*Cripsey Brook, Ongar*

**Swaines Green, Epping.** Over the next four months we will be holding regular monthly projects in partnership with the Friends of Swaines Green on this wonderful site owned by the City of London (Epping Forest). Work will be mainly centred on scrub clearance along the rides and maintaining a mosaic within the grassland areas. There will also be a major bramble clearance exercise in Lovelocks following the results of invertebrate surveys. **Meet:** 10.30am, kissing gate at entrance to Swaines Green between Lower Swaines and Coronation Hill. **Grid Ref:** TL 455 026.



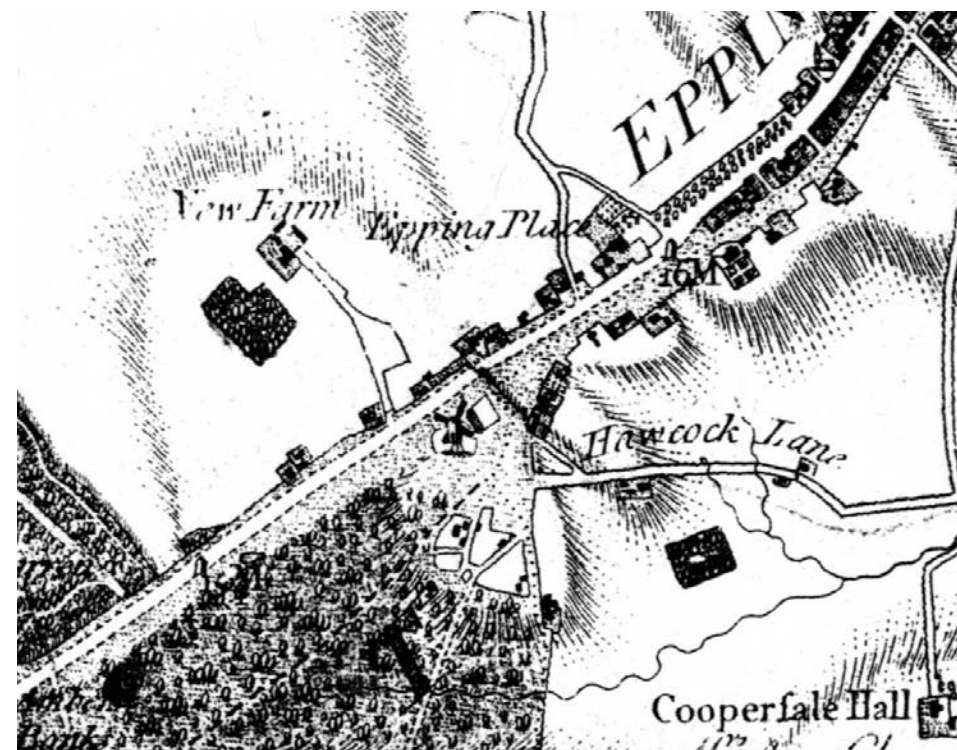
*Swaines Green, Epping*

**Chigwell Row Wood LNR.** As many of you will be aware, we have been increasing our efforts in bringing the heathland area back in to favourable condition. The extra work is clearly paying off with lots of young heather and gorse appearing where scraping of the top soil has taken place. Perhaps the most significant recording was the flowering of Lousewort this year, apparently one of the last places in East Anglia! The surrounding grassland has been cut by tractor but the heath now requires far more sensitive treatment to knock back the grass and Aspen but leaving the young heather and gorse!

**Meet:** 10.00am Lay-by Car Park off Romford Road (north bound) opposite All Saints Church, Chigwell Row. **Grid Reference:** TQ 464 932



*Essex heathland rarity Lousewort (Pedicularis sylvatica) has reappeared on Chigwell Row Wood LNRs heath.*



*Chapman and Andre Map, 1777*

This map also shows a windmill at the southern end of the common with a bowling green beside it. In 1595 and 1624, there were two windmills in Eppingbury manor, one of which was at Bell Common. By 1635 only the windmill at Bell Common remained. It still existed in 1840 but had disappeared by about 1890.

In 1870, there were still relatively few buildings in Bell Common – mainly a few inns, several large houses and a handful of cottages. In 1878, Bell Common was preserved under the Epping Forest Act as a public open space and began to be used by London day trippers for picnics. Around 1880 several pairs of cottages were built on the south side of Bell Common and two Tudor style houses were built at the northern end of the green, one of them as a lodge house to Theydon Place. At the turn of the century, there was a lot of new development in Bell Common. Griffins Wood Cottages and Creeds Cottages were built along the High Road c1900 by the Wythes family, then owners of Copped Hall, for the use of workers from the Copped Hall Estate. Around the same time, several pairs of suburban style semi-detached houses were built on Theydon Road, and Wensley House was built at the southern end of Bell Common to house the Hertfordshire and Essex Waterworks Company. The Bell Inn also appears to have been rebuilt or remodelled at this time and two rows of trees were planted on the Common along the High Road.

In 1912, Hemnall House opened as a 'cottage hospital' on the southern side of Bell Common.

Over the course of the 20th century several more new dwellings were built at Bell Common. A large number of these were built in the 1960s and 70s on the south side of Bell Common. In the 1960s, the Bell Inn became a motel known as The Bell Motor Hotel and a large new building was built to the north of it. Around this time, Bell Common was threatened by the building of the M25 but after local protests, the motorway was sent through a tunnel immediately to the south of it. There have been very few new buildings in Bell Common in the last 3 or 4 decades. The most prominent addition was the new building that was added to the north of The Bell Hotel (or The Bell Post House Hotel as it was also known) in the 1980s. the large front extension was also added to the hotel at this time.

Epping Forest District Council are currently working on a character appraisal of Bell Common Conservation Area (conservation area boundary marked in red on the 1873 OS map). The purpose of a character appraisal is to define the special interest of a conservation area and highlight any parts of that may be in need of improvement. A draft copy of the appraisal will be put out to public consultation in 2008.

**By Lucy Davis**  
**Assistant Conservation Officer**

## A short history of Bell Common

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, Bell Common formed part of the manor of Eppingbury, a large estate which was held by the Canons of Waltham Abbey. At this time, Bell Common was situated to the south of the small village of Epping Heath on Lindsey Street which later became Epping town. Bell Common was originally known as Beacon Common because the inhabitants of Epping Heath are said to have established a beacon here to warn of invasion. It has even been suggested that the settlement at Epping Heath was originally founded specifically to maintain this beacon at the edge of Eppingbury manor. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Beacon Common became known as Bell Common because of the Bell Inn, a coaching inn which still survives today as 'The Quality Hotel'.



**The Bell Inn, 1913**

The manor of Eppingbury was acquired by Thomas Heneage in mid 16<sup>th</sup> Century after the dissolution of the monasteries. The manor house of Eppingbury was at Copped Hall until its surrender in 1623. Around 1630 the Countess of Winchelsea built a new manor house at Bell Common (then Beacon Common) known as Winchelsea House. It was damaged by fire in 1672 and later rebuilt, probably before the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. In early 18<sup>th</sup> Century the name of the house was changed to Epping Place. Ralph, Lord Grey (d.1706) and his successor used the house occasionally but after 1722 it was never occupied by the lord of the manor except in 1748-58 when John Conyers lived there during the rebuilding of Copped Hall. From 1758 to c1844, it was used as an inn called the Epping Place Inn. About 1872 it was converted to two dwellings and remains so to this day.



**Bell Common, 1908,  
with horses grazing in the background**

On the south side of Bell Common is the remains of a bank which originally ran from Bell Common to Epping town immediately east of the High Street. This bank, which was known as a 'purlieu bank', marked the boundary between the parish of Epping and Epping Forest. According to W. R. Fisher in the Forest of Essex (1887), 'purlieus' were areas adjacent to legal forest land over which some, but not all, of the forest laws applied. They acted as a sort of buffer zone and are first mentioned in the Magna Carta around 1215.

In the late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> Century, a new route to London was laid out which ran southwest through the forest via Epping and Bell Common. In 1768, the Epping and Ongar Highway Trust was formed to make improvements to the main roads and this greatly stimulated traffic.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century, the High Road became a toll road. The southern toll gate stood at the junction of Theydon Road and High Road and the toll house survives today as Belle Vue House. The nearby "Forest Gate Inn" is another reference to this former toll gate. The Chapman and Andre map of 1777 shows several houses dotted around the edge of the common including Epping Place, the Forest Gate and Theydon Place, a large country house which once stood at the northern end of Bell Common and which was demolished in the early 1960s to make way for houses.

**Roding Valley Meadows LNR** Over the coming months Countrycare will be lending a helping hand to Essex Wildlife Trust and Reserve Warden Patrick Bailly on the wonderful Roding Valley Meadows. We will be focusing our efforts around Lower Brick Clamp an area of the reserve, which was once post-war prefab housing! Today, it is one of the main entrances onto the reserve and is thick in secondary woodland. The whole area is in need of a "facelift" and so we will be working to selectively thin the thick oak canopy and clear areas dominated by blackthorn. We will also be working on Horseley Mead next to the fen removing encroaching trees. **Meet:** 10.00am, Marles Croft Way (where the flats are), off Oakwood Hill, Loughton. **Grid Ref:** TQ 437 956



**Roding Valley Nature Reserve**

**World's End Wood, Roydon.** Countrycare has been working on this County Wildlife Site woodland since 1993 and over this time we have transformed the redundant hazel coppice. Again this year, we will be work with the farmer and Roydon Countrycare to continue the annual coppicing of the Hazel and clearance of invasive Elder. **Meet :** Car Park, Beaumont Park Drive, (top of Roydon High Street), Roydon. **Grid Ref:** TL 4095 0975

**Linder's Field LNR in Buckhurst Hill** is more than just a field as it also contains a wonderful old bluebell wood. The task in November will involve working in the woodland and removing scrub from the field. **Meet:** 10.00am, Roebuck Lane entrance. Please park sympathetically in roads nearby. **Grid Ref:** TQ 415 945

## Parndon Wood LNR, Harlow.

This years annual Christmas coppice is a slight away day as we cross over the border to work with colleagues in Harlow at the wonderful Parndon Wood LNR. The task for the day is helping to coppice the veteran hornbeam stools which are spread throughout the wood. In return for all of your hard work we will be providing jacket potatoes and mince pies. Please book for details.



**Thornwood Allotments, North Weald.** Join us for a day of blackthorn clearance as we clear an area which in the past has supported a colony of bee orchids. **Meet:** 10.00am, Thornwood Village Hall, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood. **Grid Ref:** TL 473 046

**Home Mead LNR, Loughton.** Is roughly square in area and contains a mixture of developing woodland, scrub and acid grassland. This winter we will be continuing the woodland thinning and scrub coppicing to improve structure of age and diversity. **Meet:** 10.00am, at the entrance to the site at the junction of Clays Lane and England's Lane, Loughton. Please park sympathetically in roads nearby (please do not use the golf course car park). **Grid Ref:** TQ 438 978



**Home Mead LNR is one of the districts nine Local Nature Reserve declared in December 2004. Your help is needed to maintain the mosaic of scrub in order for the grassland plants to flourish.**

### **Reserve Focus : Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve.**

The Roding Valley Meadows are one of Epping Forest District's nine Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Easily the largest, this 158 Acre site runs along the banks of the River Roding stretching through Loughton, Chigwell and Buckhurst Hill.



Today, the meadows are the largest and one of the last surviving areas of traditionally managed lowland hay meadow in Essex. Incorporating, herb-rich flood-plain pasture and sedge fen it is a regional biodiversity reservoir of national importance. For this, it is duly recognised as a LNR, County Wildlife Site (CWS), with parts designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also recognised within the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan grasslands habitats (BAP).

As well as the important grassland and fen habitats, there are also areas of scrub, secondary and plantation woodland. There is also a network of laid and mature hedgerows including the Ancient Green Lane, and then of course there is the River Roding and its banks.



***If your lucky you may see a Kingfisher darting along the River Roding***

The Reserve is jointly owned by Epping Forest District Council and Grange Farm Centre Trust and since 1986 has been managed by Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT).

EWT are very proud of the work done since that time and with the support of many other bodies including most importantly the volunteers who assist the warden with practical conservation work.

Autumn sees the beginning of the Winter Works with such tasks as: pond and ditch clearance, fencing and working with cattle, scrub clearance, tree felling and planting, hedgerow work which includes the popular "slash-and-burn" and the traditional art of hedge-laying. As you can see, there's much to do! And we need your help!



***Longhorn cattle graze the meadows after the summer hay cut.***

The Roding Valley Meadows Conservation Volunteers meet each Wednesday from 10am until around 3:30pm. So why not learn new skills, keep fit, socialise and have fun at the same time. Plus you will have the satisfaction of knowing you are helping improve one of the finest meadows in Essex.

For more information about conservation volunteering at Roding Valley Meadows please call **Patrick Bailly (Warden) on: 020 8508 1593** or send me an email: **patrickb@essexwt.org.uk**

### **Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) Audit**

The term PPG17 refers to the Government policy known as 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 - Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'. It requires that each Local District should conduct an audit of its accessible open space, sport and recreational facilities.

Well maintained high quality, accessible open green space, sport and recreational facilities help contribute to creating attractive and successful places for people to live and work. They also encourage the increase in land values in properties in their vicinity, which in turn helps attract development that adds to an areas economic prosperity. Identifying the location, and assessing the quality of the districts open space, sport and recreational facilities is therefore important so that improvements can be made either in terms of quantity or quality.



***Stonards Hill Playground, Epping***

Completing the audit will allow Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) to identify the quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sport and recreational facilities at a district and parish level as well as detailing the accessibility of these sites.

The results of the audit will also provide an evidence base that the Council will be able to use as a guide for the formulation of future planning policies in association with their Local Development Framework (LDF). These will be essential in the determination of planning applications, guiding new development and resolving conflicts of demand or use and negotiating section 106 agreements.



***Lower Bury Lane Allotment, Epping***

A qualitative study will also enable the identifying of potential instances for better design, management and maintenance to increase the use of open spaces or facilities.

As part of this undertaking, all of the Parish Councils in the District have been contacted and asked to provide any information which they may have on the quantity of quality of areas of open space, sport and recreational facilities in their area. As it stands there are now only a few remaining who have yet to respond.



***Epping Green (Amenity Green Space)***

**By Lewis McGann  
Planning Officer**

## Local Planning at EFDC

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of September 2004, the Government initiated its new Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, introducing a new 'two-tiered' plan system. Under the new system, County Level Structure Plans will gradually be phased out and replaced by Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs), prepared by regional planning bodies. These have been designed to set out a broad spatial planning strategy for how a region should look in 15 to 20 years time, and now form the upper tier of the new planning system.

Local Plans meanwhile are to be replaced by Local Development Frameworks (LDFs), which are to be prepared by district councils, unitary authorities or national park authorities. These will outline the spatial planning strategy for the local area, and form the lower tier of the new planning system.

Epping Forest District Council's (EFDC) LDF however is currently subject to delays. This is due to the delay of the East of England Plan (EEP), the name given to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England, produced by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA). Currently the EEP is not expected to be published in its final form until the end of the year at the earliest.

As a result it is unlikely that work on the Councils Core Strategy will begin until Christmas. This sets out the general spatial vision and objectives of the councils LDF and provides the skeleton upon which the remaining LDF documents are based around.

Despite these delays the Council still has made progress on the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The SCI identifies how and when a planning authority intends to consult local residents, community groups and other stakeholders, when preparing its LDF documents. So far the Council has completed the initial two consultation stages of consultation stages of our SCI.

The remaining final stage is submission, wherein the SCI is put forward to the Planning Inspectorate who provide a planning inspector to conduct an independent examination. Under his jurisdiction the SCI is then tested for its soundness against the nine tests of soundness provided in PPS12, the Governments Planning Policy Statement on Local Development Frameworks. The inspector will then produce a final binding report which the council must abide by in terms of the suggestions it makes.

However, Go-East have already advised our Local Plans team not to proceed to the submission stage. This is because the recently released Local Government White Paper (October 2006) suggests that, in future, instead of each Service undertaking to produce an SCI, as Planning Services at EFDC has, authorities will be required to produce one 'authority-wide' document.

The Local Development Scheme meanwhile is essentially a detailed timetable, which sets out how, and when, an authority intends to produce its LDF documents. EFDC submitted a revised LDS to Go-East in October 2006. In September this year the Council was informed that The Secretary of State has issued a direction to change the LDS. The Council is now required to amend the LDS to show the production of a Development Plan Document (DPD) on Gypsy and Traveller provision



*Development in Waltham Abbey*

**By Lewis McGann  
Planning Officer**

## Elephants on Linder's Field?

Today, the Linder's Field we all know is a nature reserve, but have you ever thought about why its there?

Using old maps we have been able to date the section of woodland on the reserve back over 225 years. The manorial records of 1775 for a M.H Beach Esq. show one large wood named Plucketts Wood. By 1850 Plucketts Wood had been split in two with a large section lost probably from the construction of the railway. This can be clearly seen on the Tithe Map of Loughton for that date which shows the wood split in two parts now called Plucketts Wood and Little Plucketts.

It is not known exactly when the last fragment of Little Plucketts Wood was destroyed for the construction of housing on Little Plucketts Way, but it was between 1920 and 1930. What is certain is that, apart from a few ancient trees surviving in gardens, the small fragment in Linder's Field is all that now remains of the former woodland.



***The entrance to Linder's Field LNR today is a fragment of Pluckett's Wood.***

By the 1930's the land had become a garden! Part of St Just on Powell Road owned by Charles Linder. Linder was a local businessman, District Councillor and magistrate. He was always very public spirited and allowed the "field" to be used by the local community for a whole variety of events. This ranged from cricket and public fetes by the British Legion through to concerts by the Buckhurst Hill Operatic Society. It was also well used by local school children and scouts.

The fairs held at Linder's Field were by all accounts spectacular affairs. A Colonel Print, a local showman used to take a large plot and rent out stalls. There were also displays of caged birds, rabbits and even dogs! And in the afternoons a brass band would play to packed audiences.

Besides the many stalls there was also many attractions, sideshows, roundabouts and swings and on one occasion there were even elephants!



One of the highlights of the fair was the famous "Lindberg Brothers". Their act consisted of the two brothers diving from a high platform into a small tank of water. This they did every afternoon at 3pm. At

10pm each evening they would repeat the performance, this time dousing the water with a flammable liquid and setting the pool alight for the dive.

So next time you visit Linder's Field shut your eyes and try to picture the scene!

**Paul Hewitt  
Countryside Manager  
Research by Martin Heaney**

## Woodland Terms Quiz

The Forests of Britain have had a remarkable and chequered history and the language which has grown up around forestry, woodlands and trees reflects this. There are many wonderful terms and words which over the centuries have developed as the language of the woodsman. Can you guess what any of these terms mean?? I'm sure you'll struggle!

Deracinate  
Foxy timber  
Hardbeam  
Dodder tree  
Shank

Answers on inside back page.

## News and Updates

### Veteran Tree Hunt

Over the summer a number of veteran tree hunt days have been undertaken aiming to show people how to recognise and record veteran trees. This has worked well and the search is in full swing.

At the time of writing (late September ) the database was nearing 800 trees. Each one has been photographed and measured and entered into our photographic data base at [favoritetrees.com](http://www.favoritetrees.com) We are also excited to have established a new mapping system (using Google earth) that enables you to find the tree on a map and aerial photograph.

As well as taking any records from members of the public, we are also trying to work strategically on a parish by parish basis. The search is largely completed in Stapleford Abbots and Roydon Parishes and we have begun to concentrate on Chigwell, Lambourne and Theydon Bois. A group in Ongar are close to starting too. So why not log on and see which trees have been recorded in your patch?



**Veteran Wild Service Tree or "Checker Tree" Apes Grove Wood, Lambourne**

If you know of any big trees please let me know either via the website or call the office for some forms. You can also come along to the next Tree Hunt Days on Sunday 7 October and 25 November. Please call the office for details.

### Websites:

[www.favoritetrees.com](http://www.favoritetrees.com)

[www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk](http://www.ancient-tree-hunt.org.uk)

[www.woodland-trust.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/](http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/)

### 50 Favourite Trees

The culmination of 18 months hard work comes to fruition on Saturday 3 November with the opening at the Waltham Abbey Museum of the 50 Favourite Trees Exhibition.

Plus look out for us on the telly this autumn as the project features in series 2 of BBC2's "The Trees that made Britain".

### Feeling guilty about your carbon footprint?

Its often hard at the minute to watch TV or pick up a magazine without the issue of your carbon footprint coming at you. Well here's an easy way to ease your conscience and pledge to reduce your emissions. Simply log on onto CRed Essex at <http://www.cred-uk.org/essex/> and you're away!!

CRed Essex is a not for profit organisation, which aims to help people who live, work and run a business in Essex to reduce their carbon dioxide emissions. CRed has developed a set of pledges for use at home or at work which will help you reduce your emissions. These range from making easy changes like swapping to low energy light bulbs through to adjusting your lifestyle and reducing your carbon footprint. Launched in June 2007, nearly 6000 people have so far committed themselves to change. So simply log on and pledge to help!



### Restoration work begins at Norton Heath Common.... By Dr Tim Gardener, Essex Field Club and Andrew Vaughan, Assistant Countryside Manager

The decline of Norton Heath is well documented in Graham Smith's interesting account of his walk from Ongar Railway Station to Fyfield and Norton Heath (Smith 2002) that was a re-creation of a ramble led by Essex Field Members in 1913 (Willmott *et al.* 1913). The authors of the 1913 account described the surface of the heath as being disturbed by shallow excavations for gravel and that the resulting swampy heath and shallow pools "*should prove happy hunting grounds for botanists*". The authors go on to list the array of heathland plants that were found and these included Common Milkwort, Heath Bedstraw, Heather and Lousewort to name but a few. Sadly as Graham describes in his more recent article, these plants have all gone, and the heath is largely dark and shady woodland that has become established due to the absence of gravel digging and rabbit grazing due to myxomatosis. No Heather is currently found on the heath and only Wood Sage *Teucrium scorodonia* and Yellow Pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum* remain.

One of Graham's last remarks in his article is that "*money and determination permitting*" the heath may one day be restored to a condition that bears some resemblance to its prime. Well we're happy to report that his wish may well be granted sooner rather than later as Countrycare are initiating a restoration project on the heath. The heath (OS grid reference: TL601042) is roughly 4 hectares in size and is registered common land. It is managed by Epping Forest District Council under an agreement dating from 1899! The heath is divided in two by a road running diagonally from the north-west to the south-east corner. The north-east section has a dense Bramble understorey and few gravel workings and is to remain an unmanaged non-intervention area as it gets less sunlight than the south-west section where the main restoration work is planned.

In February 2007, Countrycare felled around 20 Birch and Oak trees on the sunnier south-west section of the heath in an effort to let more sunlight reach the understorey, which is currently very sparse comprising of brambles, Honeysuckle and Wood Sage. Twenty permanent quadrats (50 x 50 cm) were also marked out with wooden stakes on both sections of the heath to monitor the response of the ground flora to management in a scientific manner. Monitoring of the ground flora has taken place in May and July in 2007 and will continue. The dense leaf litter and fertile topsoil has been scraped off around some of the quadrats and it will be interesting to see if any Heather will germinate from seed. This is to be followed up with more woodland thinning this winter. If Heather does not reappear then it may be necessary to sow seed from nearby sites on the scraped areas to get it established. Countrycare has an agreed felling licence with the Forestry Commission, which will enable sympathetic felling of further trees on the heath to open up the dense canopy of trees which currently exists. The current plan is to leave the more mature Oaks fringing the site as a screen whilst opening up a glade in the middle. Felled trees are being left where they fall to provide dead wood habitat for fungi and invertebrates.

Countrycare are currently in discussions with Natural England regarding the designation of the heath as the district's 10<sup>th</sup> Local Nature Reserve (LNR). This will reflect the importance of the remnant heath and it is hoped one day it may again prove a happy hunting ground for botanists. Watch this space to find out what happens!!

### References

Smith, G. (2002) 1913-2001: a lifetime of difference. *Essex Naturalist* (N.S.) **19**: 18-22.

Willmott, E.A. *et al.* (1913) Field meeting at Fyfield and Norton Heath. *Essex Naturalist* **17**: 227.