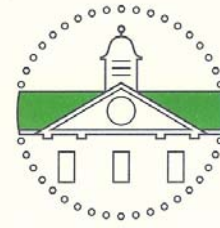


The Darley Abbey Society



NEWSLETTER No: 44

WINTER 2006



Autumn leaves Darley Park 18.11.06

As I write this the autumn leaves are falling, and I am admiring the beautiful golds, russets, and yellows adorning our parks and green spaces. The display of colour in Darley Park is a wonder to behold. About a month ago my wife and I visited the maritime provinces of Canada and New England to see the "splendours of the fall". So it is with mixed feelings that I note that our own fall this year is at least as splendid! Aren't we so lucky here in Darley Abbey to be surrounded by such lovely and varied parkland, woodland and recreational space. I make no apology therefore in dedicating this issue to the work of our local volunteers who are helping to keep our open spaces so special. Later in this issue, Dave Pearson will be reporting on the activities of FODOS (Friends of Darley Open Spaces), and Keith Dodd will be telling us about Darley Abbey's forgotten wildlife sanctuary.

David Ling Editor

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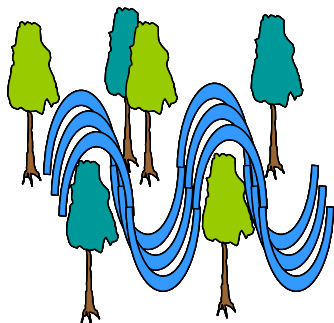
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TERRACE TEA ROOMS
In Darley Park



Good food all day
refreshments
Ice Cream
01332 556447

PARKS AND OPEN SPACES GROUP by Dave Pearson



Friends of Darley Open Spaces

(FODOS) Representing Darley Park, Derwent Park, Chester Green,
Parkers Piece, Darley Fields and Nutwood

Friends of Darley Open Spaces (FODOS) is now officially 'up and running' with a constitution, officers and the beginnings of a committee. To exert serious influence on local affairs, the committee is formed of officers from local residents groups adjacent to the open spaces, together with independent parks users representing specific interests.

The group's remit covers Darley Park, Derwent Park, Chester Green, Parker's Piece, Darley Fields and Nutwood Wild Space. Its role is to provide information to local people and voice their opinions when working with Derby City Council and other partners to manage the above parks and open spaces.

We have Derby City Council's first draft of a ten year action plan for the World Heritage site, of which the parks form part and we are presently mapping our own list of concerns and improvement suggestions against it.

We will actively help develop facilities within this plan that are in keeping with the traditions of our open spaces and supportive of all sectors of the community.

The group is, for instance, actively involved with the 'Barn' project to provide an adventure and environmental training centre. In the environmental context we see a huge opportunity to draw together the flora and fauna education made possible through Nutwood Wild Space, the National Collection of Hydrangea and Viburnum, the Perennial Garden, the Wild Flower Meadow and The Tree Trail.

To assist this vision we have applied for a Lottery Grant to refurbish the Tree Trail, clear and replant the wooded area and re-lay the bark paths that we used to have to the West of the Terrace Cafe. There is now a sub-committee for the Café Terrace Area that will be examining, amongst other things, the possibility of various forms of regular entertainment at this location in 2007.

Watch for the group's logo on 'events' posters on village notice boards and please contact me for further information and membership details.

D S Pearson, Vice Chairman. Tel. 01332 558926

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

I am pleased to welcome Dr Keith Dodd to our committee. Keith has a special interest in wildlife and will be our spokesperson on Wildlife issues. See his article on the Darley Abbey Nature Reserve. Keith will be leading a walk through the Nature reserve starting at 10am on Sunday 10th December from the Mill View gardens.

Contact Keith on 01332 557249 e-mail keith@dodd394.fsnet.co.uk

THE BARN PROJECT GETS UNDERWAY

Many of you will have noticed that work has now started on this project. Delays have been caused variously by bats, water voles and archaeological assessments. The plan is to rebuild the dilapidated Dutch Barn that was located between the Park and the Village, as an educational and outdoor adventure facility. Uses will include canoeing, orienteering and treasure hunting; nature walks and natural and industrial history studies. The centre will house canoe store and drying facility, classrooms, meeting rooms, toilets, catering and office facilities. On the insistence of the Society and the Derbyshire Archaeological Society archaeologists will keep a watching brief on the excavations for foundations and services.

RIVERSIDE WALK RE-OPENS

At last the walkway past the Silkmill Industrial Museum has been re-opened after several years of closure which caused a lot of inconvenience to Darley Abbey residents. The problem was that a 19th century fire escape had become unsafe. As a listed building in a World Heritage Site and conservation area much consultation was required with English Heritage etc. as to repair. However, it has now been restored to its former glory and DA residents can pass safely once more. So why not leave the car in the garage and enjoy a traffic free walk or cycle ride into the city centre.

OPEN MEETING

Following the success of the Open Meeting held last year, the Society held a similar meeting on the 22nd September 2006. Once again it was very well attended and may I take this opportunity of thanking all those who participated in what proved to be very useful exchange of views. I would particularly like to thank Councillor Finbar Richards, Nick Law of Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and Beverley Rhodes ecologist with Derby City Council for giving up their time. Nick and Beverley brought us up to date on the status of the Nutwood and Darley Tip nature reserve, and explained the importance of the site. Other issues discussed were traffic problems, the Concert in the Park, anti-social behaviour, use of the Toll Bridge, the World Heritage Site and the Barn Project.

Don't just moan about it. Do something!

It is proposed to convene a small Traffic Committee to consider Darley Abbey's ever-worsening traffic problems with a view to devising prospective solutions and negotiating their implementation with Derby City Council. If you are affected by the current traffic conditions in the village, and would like to contribute to the committee's work, please contact John Gabb, 24 South Avenue, Darley Abbey, Derby DE22 1FB (tel. 01332 558934).

DERWENT VALLEY WORLD HERITAGE SITE

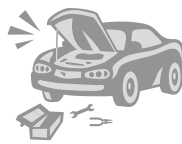
As part of our involvement with the Derwent Valley Mills Partnership we have carried out a survey of our members on the proposals contained in their Draft Economic Development Plan. Your response is set out page 4. The result of the survey has been submitted to DVMP who have promised to take it into account.



Headlines

By Julie

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NUTWOOD AND THE OLD TIP NATURE RESERVE by Keith Dodd

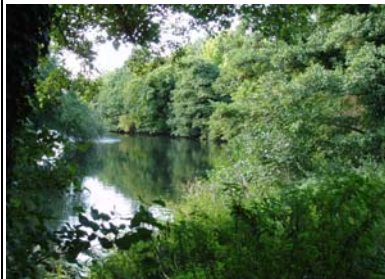
Nutwood and the adjacent old landfill site in Darley Abbey are high on the City Council's list for designation as a Local Nature Reserve. The site is presently used by a small number of walkers but many local residents seem unaware that it is open to the public and already a designated wildlife site.



Located about 400 metres upstream from the toll bridge the site extends to about 10 Hectares and is bounded on two sides by the river, by Nutwood to the west and

fields to the north. Access is at two points from the unmade road leading to the Midland canoe club: close to the first bend in the river, and just before the canoe club. While Nutwood itself is very old, originally comprising oak and coppiced hazel, the old tip was in use by the council until about 1985 when it was finished off with soil from the A38 link road. Before this it was a low-lying marshy area. Methane gas extraction continues from the site.

A variety of different habitats are found within the site, making it of special interest to naturalists. These include woodland, wetland/swamp fed by a small stream, grassland, developing scrub and other woodland, and



riparian (riverside) habitats. A survey in 2003, on behalf of the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, recorded over 260 species of plant including the rare

bee-orchid. In two years I have seen over 50 species of bird on and over the site, including green and great spotted woodpeckers, snipe, and on one memorable morning an osprey hovering over one of the wide bends in the Derwent.

In 2006 the City Council has shown increasing interest in making the site a Local Nature Reserve. This would protect the site from development, secure its range of habitats and extend its use to the public. It would also complement the educational facilities offered by the "Barn" project.

A draft management plan was produced 3 years ago by Nick Law for the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust. It includes a detailed study of the site and proposes the setting up of a management advisory group who would act as local custodians of the project. I hope this will soon get the go ahead from the City Council. The group will need to include a number of local users, through FODOS, as well as experts from the Wildlife Trust, Natural History Society and the City Council. A first task might be to agree a more acceptable name for the site. For those interested in looking around the site, I will be leading a guided walk starting at 10am on Sunday 10th December from the Mill View gardens by the weir. You are free to walk the site at any time of course, but please note the ground is rough, uneven and often wet and muddy.

Keith Dodd. Tel. 01332 557249

WORLD HERITAGE SITE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- Our members have their say

Two thirds of members would like to see the Mill complex developed for mixed business and residential use, but only one third want to see new residential development to the North and East of the site.

82% support the idea of re-instating the mill races and turbines to produce electricity.

There was massive support (about three-quarters of respondents) to most of the proposals for improving transport links, which include better car parking by Haslam's Lane, a riverboat service to the Silk Mill, footpaths and cycle routes through the Park to the Rowing Club area, and more footbridges and pedestrian routes around the village (subject to approval of details).

The one suggestion that was rejected by a two thirds majority was the proposal to close the Mill complex and Toll Bridge to through traffic. Most respondents felt that this was a vital link between the communities on both sides of the river, although advocated some sort of restriction to prevent rat running.

My thanks to all those who responded to my questionnaire. It is important that our voice is heard during the formative stages of the WHS.

David Ling