

Moor Copse – 23rd December

Neil Frankum

There was a last minute change of venue for this task, as BBOWT had more work that needed doing at Moor Copse than they did at the original site at Wildmoor. It was a really cold morning, and it took me about 20 minutes to scrape the concrete like layer of ice off the windscreen. It was also very foggy, and when we arrived on site you could hardly see anything. We had the key to the gate, and were able to drive down the narrow lane (branches scraping the side of the van!) From the end of the lane it was going to be a long walk across three fields to the far side of the site. Luckily the weather worked in our favour, and the frozen ground meant we were able to drive to within 100m of the worksite. However, after unloading, I drove back to the end of the track, in case the ground thawed, as some bits looked like they would be very soft when not frozen! The task was coppicing a very straggly hedge, to try and reinvigorate it. BBOWT had been working here on Thursday, starting the job, and we carried on along the next stretch. They had left their fire to burn down on its own, and the pile of ash was still hot enough, that all I had to do was stack some dry twigs on top, and I had a fire going within about a minute. I wish getting the fire lit was always this easy! Richard did most of the coppicing with the chainsaw, whilst the rest of us dragged, chopped, and burnt the resulting brash. We finished the day off with mince pies, and then headed home through the fog that had never really lifted all day.

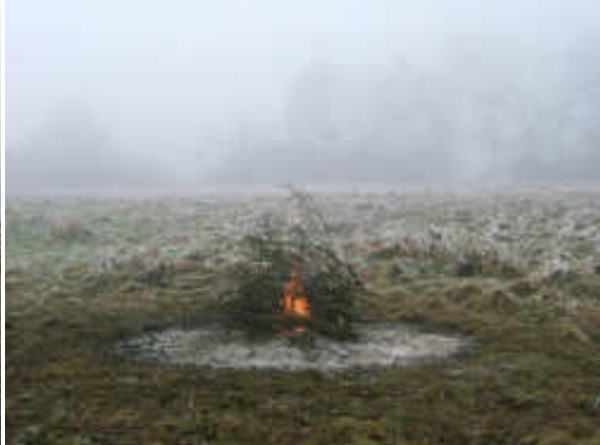


Top – Rodney feeding the fire. Above – We were greeted by a very foggy day.



Above – Another wintry view of the site.

Below left – as far as we could get with the van. Below right – the fire a couple of minutes after I put the first twigs on the pile of ash.
Bottom – Nigel makes sure that the tree being cut by Richard falls away from the fence and doesn't damage it.



Greenham Common – 16th December

Neil Frankum



This was a joint task with the Greenham and Crookham Conservation volunteers. We were clearing birch scrub on the heathland area to the south of where the west end of the runway used to be. After we had got a big enough pile of ash from burning the brashings, an industrial scale barbeque was built out of birch logs, and burgers, sausages, and hot mince pies provided the perfect end to a nice day.



Above – tea break.
Right – The industrial BBQ.
Below left – one of the cows that came to investigate.
Below right – BBQ





Above left – the bonfire after it was stoked up again post BBQ. Above right – Greenham sunset.

Snelsmore Common – 30th December

David Fiddes



The last task of the year was a scrub bash in "Spooky hollow" on the far side of the common. We were clearing small sycamore from around the stream leading up to the hollow. This was a continuation of an autumn bash, and a good part of our efforts were spent dragging and burning felled trees from that task. We got a good fire going and Alistair was able to warm his mince pie, kindly provided by Keith the warden.

Above – Axel, Alastair & Richard. Below left – view across the cleared area. Below right – Richard, Axel, & Neil waiting for the fire to burn down.



Wildmoor – 6th January

Neil Frankum



Richard chainsawing

This task was clearing birch and pine from the Bracknell Forest Borough Council part of the heathland. We were up on the side of the hill, and so had good views over the site. We were slightly



Peter and the pyrotechnically challenged fire

pyrotechnically challenged to start with, but eventually got a good fire going to burn the brashings. Some of the straighter cut trees were converted into stakes, and a dead hedge built with some of the brash to steer the general public away from part of the heath and keep them on one of the bigger paths.

Right – Rodney & Richard feeding the fire.
Below – Cutting stakes for the dead hedge.



Padworth Common – 3rd February

Neil Frankum



Above – Richard, Nigel & Rodney at Padworth

We were working on the heathland area to the north of the main road. The task was a bit of a tidy up task. The birch scrub in the area had been cut previously, but with the stumps left high to allow them to be treated to prevent regrowth. Now that the treatment had had time to take effect, we were cutting the stumps down to ground level, and burning all the brashings.



Above left – Nigel watches the fire. Above right – Richard chopping up some of the brash to feed the fire.

Snelsmore Common – 13th January

No task report.

Longhill Park – 20th January

No task report.

Jock's Copse – 27th January

No task report.

Newsletter

There's been a slight shortage of copy for the newsletter. So get typing, as it would be nice to have a few more task reports etc from other people again! Next copy date is 6th April.

Membership

There are still a lot of you that haven't renewed. I'll probably be fairly ruthless trimming the mailing list soon, so if you want to guarantee your copy of the newsletter for the next year, then all you need to do is to part with a nice crisp fiver for your membership subscription.

Socials

Pub – Sundays after task

If everyone feels up to it we sometimes adjourn to the pub after task. We'll usually decide where we are going on task, when we've found out what everyone wants to do.

Cinema Trips / Other socials etc

These get arranged on an ad hoc basis - turn up on task, contact one of us, or sign up for the Email mailing list to find out the details.

Social Reports

Cinema – Rescue Dawn

Vietnam war film about an American pilot held captive, and his escape. OK film.

Cinema – The Kite Runner

Good film, spoilt by the Showcase's usual screw up at the start, which resulted in the subtitles being invisible off the screen.

Cinema – I am Legend

This was a better film than I was expecting. An American version of 28 Days Later, set in New York.

Cinema – No Country For Old Men

Good film, up to the point about 15 minutes from the end where it totally lost the plot.

Task Details:

24th February - 27th April 2008

To book for task, please contact the task-leader listed below (If possible, by the Thursday before the task). Transport is available from the Tool Store at Edenham Crescent at 9:10am, and from the front of Reading Station (near the taxi rank) at 9:30am. Other pick-up points can sometimes be arranged – please contact the task-leader.

You are advised to wear old clothing, and stout boots or wellies (preferably with steel toecaps).

Also bring waterproofs and a packed lunch, BeC will provide Tea/Coffee/Squash and Biscuits. As it is winter we could experience any type of weather, so wrap up warm / bring the sun cream?!!.

Whenever possible, please do let the task leader know you are planning to come on task. Occasionally task details change at short notice, and we can only let you know of changes if we know you are planning to attend the task. However we do always take enough tools and biscuits for a few extras, so if you get the urge on Sunday morning, but haven't booked, you will still be made welcome.

We often go to the pub after task, so remember to bring some money (and a change of clothes if it's likely to be a very muddy task) if you want to join us.

Where the leader is 'TBA' look out for the EMail updates letting you know who is going to be leading that task.

WHITEGROVE COPSE, BRACKNELL

24th February 2008

NOTE – Change of venue from that previously advertised.

Task: Coppicing / dead hedging.

Leader: Neil Frankum 0118 975 1528 / 0793 225 8788

Meet at: 10:15am at Whitegrove Copse (Grid ref: SU878702). From the Met Office roundabout in Bracknell, head northeast on Park Road. Straight across the first roundabout and then left at the next roundabout onto Harvest Ride. Go past the site on the left, and turn left into Top Common. The entrance is down here on the left, just after a chicane in the road. Park considerably!

Userbody: Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

PADWORTH COMMON

2nd March 2008

NOTE – Its Reading Half Marathon today, so there won't be a station pickup due to the road closures in the town centre. Meet us at the tool store at Edenham Crescent, or on site.

Task: Scrub clearance.

Leader: Peter Harrison 0118 950 9276

Meet at: 10-15am at the car park (Grid reference SU619648). Head west along the A4 from Junction 12 of the M4 for approximately 3 miles. Just before you get to the roundabout at the junction of the A4 and A340 turn left into a minor road signposted towards Padworth. Follow this road for approximately 2 miles. The car park is on the right just before you reach the T junction with the Burghfield Common to Tadley Road.

Userbody: West Berkshire District Council.

SNELSMORE COMMON, Newbury

9th March 2008

Task: Scrub bashing.

Leader: Aimee Dale 0796 878 7080

Meet at: 10:15 at the site (Grid Ref SU463710). Snelsmore Common country park is located north of Newbury along the B4494 road from Donnington to Wantage. The entrance is sign posted from the road opposite the entrance to Mary Hare Grammar School.

Userbody: West Berkshire District Council.

PINEWOOD, Crowthorne

16th March 2008

Task: Rhododendron clearance.

Leader: Peter Harrison 0118 950 9276

Meet at: 10:15 at the site (Grid Ref SU840660). Head west from the junction of the A3095 and B3430 (Nine Mile Ride) south of Bracknell. At the next roundabout turn right. In about 200m turn left into the site. Park in the carpark, and follow the arrows to the worksite (somewhere in the woods behind the leisure centre buildings and allotments). Take care crossing the (minature) railway if the steam trains are running!

Userbody: Wokingham Without Parish Council.

YATELEY COMMON, Yateley

23rd March 2008

Task: Footpath work.

Leader: TBA

Meet at: Meet at: 10:15 at the site. There are several car parks along the A30 & Cricket Hill Lane, so contact the leader for directions if you are making your own way to site.

Userbody: Hampshire County Council.

SAVERNAKE PARK, BRACKNELL**30th March 2008****NOTE – The clocks go forward one hour on Saturday night.**

Task: Holly clearance.

Leader: Neil Frankum 0118 975 1528 / 0793 225 8788

Meet at: 10:15am at the site on Savernake Way, Bracknell (Grid ref: SU886678). From the Coral Reef roundabout at the junction of the A322 and B3430, head north on the B3430 towards Martin's Heron. Go straight across the first roundabout, and turn left at the next roundabout into Savernake Way. The site is on this road.

Userbody: Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

PINEWOOD, Crowthorne**6th April 2008**

Task: Rhododendron clearance.

Leader: David Fiddes 0780 191 7104

Meet at: 10:15 at the site (Grid Ref SU840660). See 16th March for details.

Userbody: Wokingham Without Parish Council.

SNELSMORE COMMON, Newbury**13th April 2008**

Task: Scrub bashing or path work (season dependant).

Leader: TBA

Meet at: 10:15 at the site (Grid Ref SU463710). See 9th March for directions.

Userbody: West Berkshire District Council.

ENGLEMERE POND, Bracknell**20th April 2008**

Task: Removing / replacing a boardwalk.

Leader: Neil Frankum 0118 975 1528 / 0793 225 8788

Meet at: 10:15 at the site (Grid Ref SU900683). The car park is on the B3017 just north of the humpback railway bridge.

Userbody: Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

POPES MEADOW, BRACKNELL**27th April 2008**

Task: Relaying woodchip / vegetation clearance.

Leader: Nigel Mason-Flucke 01252 835919

Meet at: 10:15am at the site on St. Marks Road, Binfield (Grid ref: SU845700). From the Coppid Beech roundabout on the A329(M), head east on the B3408. Go straight across the roundabout and turn left at the traffic lights into St. Marks Road. The site is on the left.

Userbody: Bracknell Forest Borough Council.

Diary Dates**Sun 6th Apr.** Newsletter copy date. Any items (task reports etc) for inclusion in the next newsletter should be Email to me on or preferably before this date.**BeC Contacts**

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Membership/Newsletter:	Neil Frankum	(0118) 975 1528 *	
Social Secretary	Aimee Dale	0118 975 8253	
Committee Member	David Fiddes	(0118) 948 2681 *	
		* Answerphone	

Email: membership@berkshire-conservation-volunteers.org.uk**MOBILE:** We have a mobile phone for task use – although primarily for use in emergencies, volunteers can also use it to contact us if they are having difficulties locating the worksite. The number is **07875 262129**. **NB:** this will only be switched on during tasks.**www.berkshire-conservation-volunteers.org.uk**