

WHAT'S IN THIS NEWSLETTER?

- What's Happening on the Nickey Line
- Dacorum BC and SADC Greenspace Action Plans
- Redbourn car park proposals
- New Harpenden MP inspects Redbourn Lane / A5183 crossings
- AGM and talk from Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust 10th May
- Events and Work Parties Updates
- Book Holidays with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays and Earn the Friends £s
- We need a committee member for Hemel Hempstead

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE NICKEY LINE

Hemel Hempstead News

Dacorum GAP Plan

Countryside Management Service (CMS) are producing the Greenspace Action Plan (GAP) for Dacorum's section of the Nickey Line. One round of consultation has been undertaken and another round of consultation is scheduled for Mid April.

Litter Picking, Ivy Clearance Programme, Fallen Trees / Branches

Our volunteers have been busy collecting litter and continuing with the ivy clearance programme around old railway features. The Winter winds have meant fallen trees and branches have obstructed the pathway both in Dacorum and over the St Albans boundary on several occasions and our Hemel Hempstead based volunteers have cleared these away.



Litter Collection near Cherry Tree Lane



Ivy Clearance Around Old Fence



Fallen Branch by Eastman Way



Fallen Tree Near Cherry Tree Lane

East Hemel Hempstead Development

Advisory meetings are continuing.

Sign Vandalised

Vandals have knocked down a sign by the Keens Field steps to the Queensway Bridge. It was reported first by Nickey Line user Andy Mitchell on our Facebook Group page:

www.facebook.com/groups/363326034099616.

(or go to Facebook and search for The Nickey Line).

Dacorum B.C. have retrieved the sign which they say is repairable and will fix it back up.



Redbourn News

Main Road Crossings - Redbourn Lane Car Park

New Harpenden MP Bim Afolami has inspected the Redbourn Lane A5183 roundabout crossings with your chairman and agreed the need for improved safety and usability.

Herts Highways are considering a proposal to remove the earth bunds around the Redbourn Lane Car Park which aggravate the sightlines difficulties there and replace them with a fence. We have discussed the plans with the officials involved on site and requested some low cost usability improvements as part of the envisaged work.

Work Parties

Countryside Management Services have run several work parties coppicing near Chequer Lane.



Redbourn Car Park- With Bunds



Coppicing near Chequer Lane

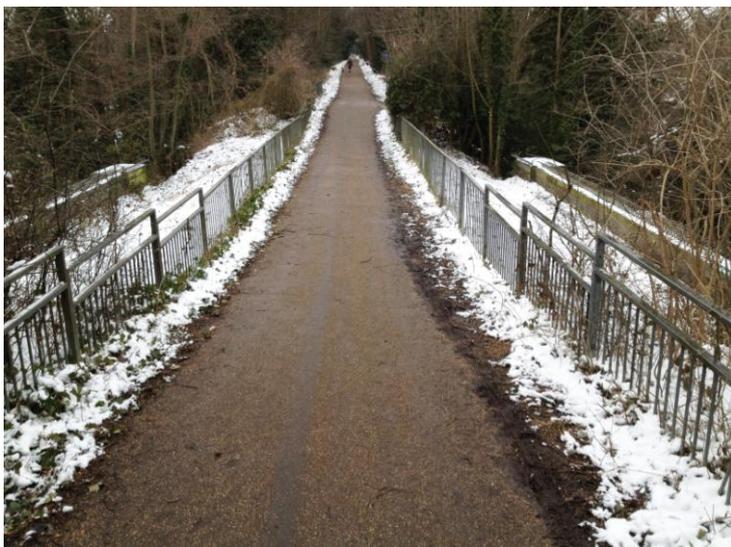
Harpenden News

Luton Road Bridge and Pathway Sweeping

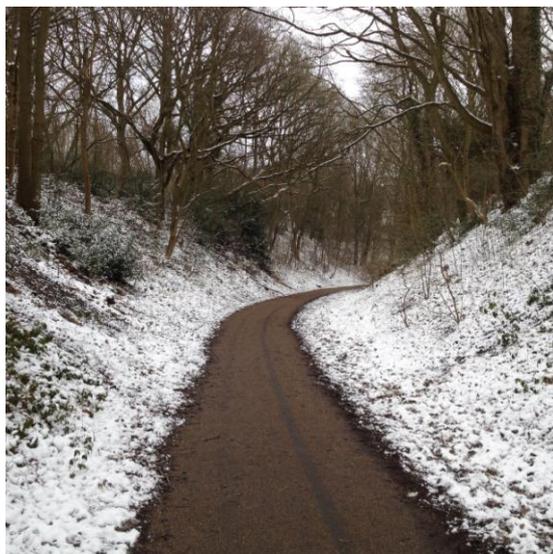
Following our discussions with them last year, St Albans DC have cleared the trees and scrub on the Luton Road bridge to prevent long term root damage.

At our request, they have also swept the pathway from Hollybush Lane to Roundwood Crossing to remove accumulated leaf mould and other debris - particularly needed in the cuttings.

We have thanked SADC for this great support.



Luton Road Bridge with Sides Cleared



Cutting Pathway Swept

More Vandal Damage Quickly Repaired by St Albans DC

Vandals – believed to be 3 teenagers – tore up the safety barriers at '5 Ways' path junction and nearby signposts. SADC to their credit moved quickly to repair the damage and replace sign posts. It would have been nice not to have to of course.



5 Ways Barriers Ripped Up



Signpost Knocked Over

FRIENDS NEWS

GDPR Review

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a regulation by which the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission intend to strengthen and unify data protection for all individuals within the European Union (EU).

We have reviewed how we deal with your membership information and believe we fully comply with this. Should you wish us not to retain your details for any reason, please tell us.

Facebook Group "The Nickey Line"

Our Facebook Group "The Nickey Line" now has over 120 users who publish pictures, comments and stories about the Line as well as communicating problems noticed. Why not join the group today and add your favourite photos and stories?

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/363326034099616>

Ramblers Worldwide Holidays Walking Partnership

We continue to receive donations from our arrangement with this company –
Reminder: Book a holiday with Ramblers Worldwide Holidays
(www.ramblersholidays.co.uk) and you can nominate Friends of the Nickey Line to receive £10 per head for UK holidays, £20 for short haul holidays, and £30 per head for long haul holidays.

****You must nominate Friends when you book! ****

Work Parties – St Albans GAP Second Year Progress

The Friends contributed and completed all the tasks on the second year of the St Albans GAP. Many of you will have noticed the small orchard created, with the support of CMS, in the opened up space a 100m on the Hemel side of Chequer Lane in Redbourn, alongside which many of the mature hazels were coppiced and the cuttings used to create dead hedges, wonderful habitat for invertebrates and nesting birds. Close to 5 Ways at the top of Townsend Lane in Harpenden new

scallops have been created in the NW hedge, breaking up the wall of vegetation to reveal new views and let more light onto the pathway. Further hedging on the same side of the path below Knott Wood was laid, and the grass scallops alongside Knott Wood, managed for wildlife, improve year on year for both wild flowers and butterflies.

WHAT'S ON?

AGM and talk by Tim Hill (HMWT), Thursday 10 May at 19.30 at Park Hall, Harpenden - This evening the Friends will hold our AGM, with another busy year to report upon and aims for the future. This will be followed by a talk by Tim Hill, the Conservation Manager for the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, the title of the talk being 'A Living Landscape for Hertfordshire - Every Little Helps; Tim brings a wealth of knowledge on local wildlife, and how to manage the land for its benefit.

Refreshments will be available. All are welcome.

Walks Programme

The Nickey Line in Hemel Hempstead Town - Saturday 28th April at 10.40 a.m. - This walk, led by our own Roger Green, is organised jointly with the Railway Ramblers, and will follow the route of the Nickey Line from Boxmoor through Hemel Hempstead, tracing what remains of the Nickey Line. The route will use footpaths, streets, a meadow, and a short length of the old railway embankment. There is the opportunity for refreshments after about 2 miles, and lunch after about 3.5 miles. The return to the start point uses a different route, although one can catch a No 500 bus back to the start point. See the web site for details. **N.B. Numbers are limited and places must be booked.**

Dawn Chorus Walk and Breakfast Sunday 29th April at YWAM starting 5.45 a.m. - Friends of the Nickey Line and the local branch of the RSPB are holding their 6th biannual dawn chorus and breakfast walk at Youth with a Mission (YWAM), starting 5.45 a.m. prompt from the rear car park. Access YWAM using the entrance alongside the Ambrose Lane bridge. There is a choice of a bacon sandwich or pain au chocolate, plus fruit juice, tea or coffee which must be selected when booking a place. Prepayment required, with cheques for £6.00 pp in favour of Friends of the Nickey Line sent to Roger at 30 Ambrose Lane, Harpenden, AL5 4AX. Wear warm clothing and stout footwear. **N.B. Early booking advised - always very popular!!** Further details from Roger 01582 763560 or Geoff 01582 765543 if needed.

Redbourn Springwatch Walk, Saturday 12th May 2018, from 10 a.m. - The Friends of the Nickey Line and the Ver Valley Society are holding a joint walk to see bluebells, early purple orchids and springtime birds. We shall start at the car park on Redbourn Common and the walk will be about 4 miles. We expect to return by 12.30. Wear stout shoes and bring binoculars if you have them. No need to book. Contact Roger on 01582 763560 if further details needed.

Come and See the Butterflies! Sunday 22 July at 11 a.m. from Roundwood School Crossing - Join us for our annual butterfly walk of about 2 1/2 miles to see the butterflies on the Nickey Line. The Nickey Line is managed for wildlife, and over 16 different species in total have been seen on the on the last two walks, including a butterfly last year never previously recorded on the Line!
Meet at the Roundwood School Crossing, Harpenden, and wear stout shoes. Bring a pair of near focussing binoculars if you have them. Contact Roger on 01582 763560 or email rogerjan76@gmail.com if more details needed.

The Nickey Line in Hemel Hempstead Town - Saturday Tuesday 7th August at 10.40 a.m. - This is a repeat of the walk in April, led by our own Roger Green and organised jointly with the Railway Ramblers. **N.B. Numbers are again limited and places must be booked.**

See our website www.nickeyline.org for events as they are announced.

Nickey Line Talk To Your Local Group ?

We typically give 2 – 4 illustrated talks a year on the History of the Nickey Line to local organisations who want a guest speaker, in return for a small donation to the Friends.

If you know of any organisation who may want one, please suggest they email us on friends@nickeyline.org.

*****YOUR COMMITTEE – CAN YOU HELP?*****

We need **another committee member from Hemel Hempstead** - Even a small amount of your time would be very welcome to help us monitor the Hemel Hempstead section of the Nickey Line and give feedback to Dacorum Borough Council. Can you help? Email friends@nickeyline.org or ring 01582 622771 to chat about what you could do.

Comments and feedback on this newsletter and any aspect of the Nickey Line are welcomed – email friends@nickeyline.org.