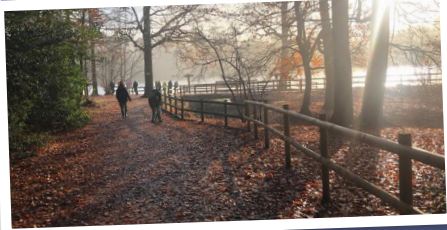




# Explore Your Colne Valley Regional Park

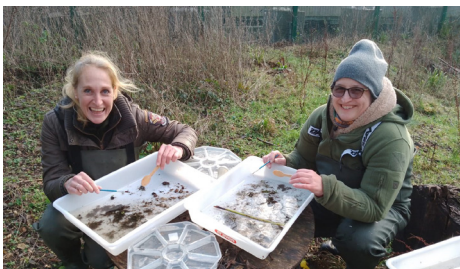


## WINTER WALKS

A walk in the countryside is a great way to blow away the cobwebs, lift your mood and is good exercise for both mind and body, providing a kaleidoscope of colours and sounds to stimulate the senses.

See our website for some of our favourite winter walks:

<https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/autumn-walks-in-the-colne-valley-park/>



## Volunteer for River Fly Monitoring

**Would you like to help monitor the health of your local river?**

Riverfly surveying involves taking a sample from a shallow riverbed and counting the types and numbers of tiny invertebrates. It is a way of checking for pollution incidents. You can volunteer for just a few hours or on a regular basis to suit you. Learn more about the process here:

<https://colnevalleypark.org.uk/riverfly-survey/>



**T**he Colne Valley Regional Park is a great example of the positive role that countryside immediately next to major cities can deliver for the benefit of people and wildlife, including food production, climate change adaptation and access to the natural environment with all the health and wellbeing benefits this brings.

Last year, we launched a campaign to protect the Colne Valley Regional Park in the face of overwhelming development pressure that now threatens its very future. Its mission is to:

**“Persuade decision-makers to act now to protect the special landscape of the Colne Valley Regional Park, specifically safeguarding it for future generations and enabling it to realise its full potential for the benefit of people and wildlife.”**

In 2024 we have worked with local authorities, MPs, national government and other influential bodies to discuss our concerns, show them the effects on the ground and discuss solutions in more detail. We are grateful to those local authorities, MPs and others who have already been in touch with us to discuss how they can help the campaign, and we look forward to speaking to others in 2025.

**“We need more joined-up thinking from local councils and from national government. Only then will the potential of the Green Belt be realised. Our campaign shows the way.”**



# LANDSCAPE RECOVERY

A popular public footpath between Uxbridge and Denham Country Park has undergone major improvements. This important link to the countryside was overgrown and uneven making it unwelcoming and difficult to pass. The project included resurfacing the footpath and installing new fences along the route.

The initial costs were covered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Highways England and Hillingdon Council. And thanks to subsequent funding from Grundon Waste Management, further improvements were made to the path in August 2024. The co-operation and permission of landowners, ARC Uxbridge, and Hillingdon and Buckinghamshire councils were crucial to delivering the project successfully. ARC Uxbridge has also agreed to include maintenance of the path in its yearly site management plan. Corporate volunteering teams from Coca Cola and Grundon also contributed to the footpath clearance, and Hillingdon Litter Pickers have been doing a fabulous job of keeping it tidy.



## Denham Country Park

This autumn, Buckinghamshire Council is carrying out enhancement work in the park. Five pedestrian bridges will be replaced and 1km of paths will be raised and resurfaced.

Footpath diversions are in place while the work is underway. The teams will also be tackling ditches and trees to improve the flow and storage of flood water.

Please see our [website](#) for further information.

## Rickmansworth Aquadrome

From autumn 2024 to spring 2025, Three Rivers Council is installing a new bridge to make it easier and safer to cross the River Colne. To allow these works, the current bridge off Riverside Drive and Ebury play area will be closed at various times.

For details, please see [Three Rivers website](#), social media and local signs.



## Heathrow Giving Back

**V**olunteers from Heathrow Airport have been working to improve the environment for communities across the Colne Valley Regional Park.



In 2024, more than 100 Heathrow staff have taken part in a series of environmental conservation days where the work has included removal of invasive species (for example Pennywort, Buddleia and Himalayan Balsam), hacking out brambles, clearing paths, litter picking, improving a community orchard and much more. Sites enhanced by the enthusiastic teams include Denham Quarry Woods and Harefield Nature Reserve, with a special focus on beautiful Staines Moor SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest).

Anwara Ali, Volunteering Partnerships Manager, Heathrow Sustainability and Communities said:

**“We are delighted to support Colne Valley Regional Park with these Community Days via our Giving Back Programme. Our colleagues really enjoy championing biodiversity, making environmental improvements and helping ecological conservation in our local green spaces.”**



Jess Bampton, Green Skills Team Leader for Groundwork South explained:

**“We have been delighted to work in partnership with the teams from Heathrow, who have worked so hard to help us support local communities by improving access, enhancing biodiversity and tackling invasive species.”**



# Our Changing Landscape



The Colne Valley Regional Park was founded in 1965. From this spot in Harefield, representatives from the local authorities in Hillingdon and Buckinghamshire took in the view across the valley and discussed how this precious landscape could best be managed and improved for the benefit of people and wildlife for generations to come.

While the Colne Valley was initially shaped by glacial activity and the effects of flooding, it was the intervention of industry, significantly the digging of gravel pits in the 20th century, that has left us with the wonderful mosaic of lakes and connecting waterways that we can enjoy today. Thanks to funding from Grundon, we are replacing the Interpretation Board at this site, showing how this section of the valley looked prior to the HS2 railway project, and explaining the Colne Valley's history of continuing change.

## Trustees Week

**The remit of the Colne Valley Park Trust is to protect, enhance and promote the Colne Valley Regional Park.**

Our Trustees are drawn from a wide range of professional backgrounds, including farming, business, local government, and journalism. We are incredibly fortunate and grateful to have such hard-working champions who volunteer to use their extensive experience for the benefit of our local communities and environment. Anthony Longden, explains why he finds being a Trustee so rewarding:

“One of the most compelling parts of being a trustee is the chance to make a positive impact on the countryside in which I grew up. I have the opportunity to use my skills to help protect the local environment and learn from the committed team of passionate individuals who make up the Trust.”



Colne Valley Park Trustees & Team

## Rural Reads

The following titles are recommended as a taster to help understand how and why your local patch of 'England's Green and Pleasant Land' looks and functions in the way it does. You can read this article in more detail on our website at <https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/rural-reads/>

*The History of the Countryside*

**Oliver Rackham, 1986**

*Wilding: The return of nature to a British Farm*

**Isabella Tree, 2018**

*The unofficial countryside*

**Richard Mabey, 1973**

*Country Rambles round Uxbridge*

**Stephen Springall, 1907**

*Winnie the Pooh and The House at Pooh Corner*

**A.A. Milne, 1926 & 1928**

*Feral*

**George Monbiot, 2013**

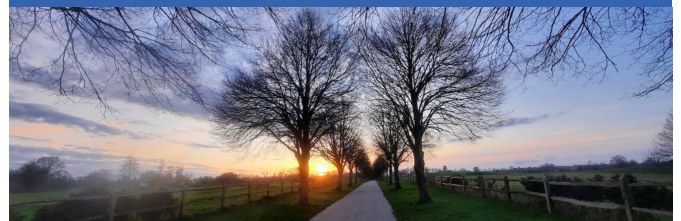
**“The Colne Valley in summer-time is by many simply worshipped.... Why the jaded chap of London looks weekly to this Colne Valley as the reviver of his hopes and healthfulness.”**

*Country Rambles Around Uxbridge, Stephen Springall*

Pick up a book to learn about the history and heritage of our landscape



## LEAVE US A GIFT IN YOUR WILL



The Colne Valley Park Trust welcomes gifts of any size – large or small – to support the vital work it does in maintaining and enhancing this special place.

The Park is a vibrant, living entity vital to good health and overall well-being: an important environment, rich in wildlife, in which people live, work and play, and one that actively encourages farming and forestry to thrive.

If you would like your legacy to help protect and enhance the environment and wildlife of Colne Valley Regional Park, please consider remembering our charity in your will. Further details can be found at:

[https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/donate/leave\\_a\\_gift/](https://www.colnevalleypark.org.uk/donate/leave_a_gift/)

# Two views, two bridges

**THERE has been much debate recently about the Green Belt. A recent piece in *The Economist* argues in favour of an immense proposed data centre in Iver:**

“Stand on the bridge where Iver Lane crosses the M25 and look north. Eight lanes of traffic hurtle along London’s orbital motorway beneath you. Shift your gaze east of the roaring stream, between the motorway barriers and an industrial estate, and you will see a former landfill site that happens to sit in the Green Belt”.

We viewed the same site from a different bridge nearby and suggested:

“Stand on the bridge where Iver Lane crosses the River Colne and look north. Water hurtles along London’s beautiful boundary river beneath you. Shift your gaze west of the roaring stream, and you will see a green buffer



The view looking north from Iver Lane

and wildlife/landscape corridor that is the first taste of countryside in the Green Belt”.

So, a simple change of perspective can alter everything. Merely standing on the next bridge along and focusing on the value of the green space in front of you, provides a completely different take on matters.

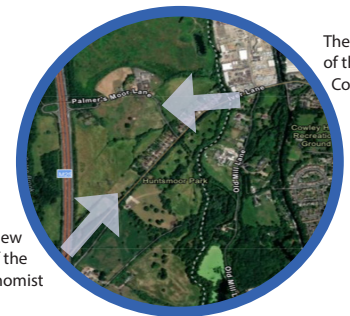
Unfortunately, we face multiple developments on this colossal scale – a Motorway Service Area in Iver has also been granted planning approval in recent months. We will continue to engage policy-makers, local authorities

and communities in this urgent conversation.

The debate about the future of the Green Belt is crucially important. There are competing needs (for housing/other development and for access to nature) that must be carefully considered and balanced.

The Government needs to create a regional and national plan to address varied requirements for development and green spaces.

Each approved development should result in incremental improvement of remaining countryside and its connectivity for people and wildlife.



The view of the Countryside

The view of the Economist

## Help us to protect the Park

### To help us safeguard the Colne Valley Park for the future, please:

- Write to your MP to highlight the importance of conserving the Park
- Sign up to our newsletter via our website to stay up to date
- Follow us on our social media pages listed below, and help us to speak up for the Park
- Volunteer with us via our website



## Become a Colne Valley Friend

### Would you like to help us protect and enhance the Colne Valley Park?

- Please join the Friends of the Park to support our endeavors. Benefits include:
- Invitations to events and guided walks
  - Opportunities to volunteer locally
  - Regular newsletters and information
  - Special offers with our Riverside café

Please see our website: [colnevalleypark.org.uk/become-a-champion/](http://colnevalleypark.org.uk/become-a-champion/) or send us an email.

## Donate to the Colne Valley Park

### Your gift could help us:

- In our weekly conservation tasks in parks, meadows and wetlands
- Maintain woods and wetland for the benefit of people and wildlife.
- Respond to development proposals including motorway services etc.

Please see our website: [colnevalleypark.org.uk/donate](http://colnevalleypark.org.uk/donate) or send us an email.



With thanks to our corporate supporters for their continued commitment to us: Lakeside Energy from Waste, and

Heathrow

AffinityWater

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SEGRO

AMBUSH  
SECURITY SYSTEMS

Denham Aerodrome

The Colne Valley Regional Park is supported by nearly 100 member organisations. Each of these organisations support the six objectives of the Colne Valley Regional Park which revolve around improving and protecting the local:

- Landscape
- Countryside
- Biodiversity
- Countryside recreation
- Rural economy
- Community participation

**With thanks to:** Buckinghamshire Council, Batchworth Community Council, Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council, Denham Parish Council, Friends of the Colne Valley Park, Gerrards Cross Town Council, Horton Parish Council, Iver & District Countryside Association, Iver Parish Council, London Borough of Hillingdon, Spelthorne Borough Council and Wexham Parish Council, for their financial contributions.