

Surrey Hills Society **views**



The Woodlands of the Surrey Hills



Top and above: Society members on a visit to Shamley Green's woodlands.



Suffolk Punch cart ride at the Bramley Wood Fair

As many of you will know, Surrey is the most wooded county in England. While counties like Yorkshire make great strides ahead in wind turbine technology, Surrey has been championing wood as an alternative fuel source, which makes sense as we have so much of it.

The new Godalming Leisure Centre, Surrey Sports Park and even Heathrow's terminal 5 have used wood fuel for their heating and the industry is growing. As this industry expands, more of Surrey's neglected woodlands are being brought

back into sustainable management. As you read this, we'll be getting ready to attend the 2012 Surrey Hills Wood Fair in Bramley. Come and find out more about wood-fuel, biomass boilers and woodland crafts, as well as fun attractions for children like tree climbing, bug hunts and horse and cart rides on Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 October.

As part of this year's focus on trees and woodlands we have also had a fascinating talk from Patrick Mannix, owner of an ancient woodland in

Shamley Green back in the early spring. We then joined him for a full day out in the wood listening to the challenges of managing a woodland here in Surrey whilst trying to make it pay and secure its long term future.

Continuing our current theme on trees and woods, we have also organised for Ted Green MBE to give a talk on ancient trees at the Leatherhead Institute on 23 November at 7pm. Come and join us there.

Our thanks to May Gurney for providing graphic design and printing of our newsletters. Thanks to our society members for their on-going contributions and their photos.

Chairman's View



Volunteers at Denbies Road Race Festival, left to right: Ken Bare, Katie Plummer, Diane Cooper, Jeff Holliday and our chairman Chris Howard.

Well, what a summer we have had! Lots of really interesting events from studying the Basingstoke Canal to the challenges of managing an ancient woodland; from medieval murals to 14c houses to name just a few. Thank you so much to all the volunteers who led these events and especially the Events Committee for putting the programme together.

And then of course we had the Olympics, which the Society ended up being involved with. A very short notice plea for volunteers to act as stewards at the Cycle Festival and big screen event at

Denbies Winery was heeded by quite a few of our members – too many to name here but thank you to you all. We certainly helped raise the profile of the Surrey Hills, our Society, as well as assisting, like so many other volunteers, to make the London Games the success it was.

We have a busy autumn planned with our trip to Epsom Downs race course, a long distance walk on the 55 miles of the Greensand Way over two weekends, a day out in Buckland, a very special talk on ancient trees from Ted Green MBE

and much, much more. By the time you're reading this, we will be very close to the Surrey Hills Wood Fair on 6 and 7 October, which will be bigger and better than ever this year. Ken Bare will be back doing his round of winter talks to various groups raising valuable funds for the Society and raising awareness of our beautiful countryside and its special designation. If you know of a group looking for an interesting speaker do recommend the Surrey Hills Society.

Finally, if you are struggling for a gift for that hard to buy for friend or relative this Christmas, why not check out our new Surrey Hills Society membership gift pack on our website or available for sale in the Guildford Tourist Office (see back page for view of gift pack). I look forward to seeing you at our AGM at Bocketts Farm in October, if not before.

Chris Howard
Chairman



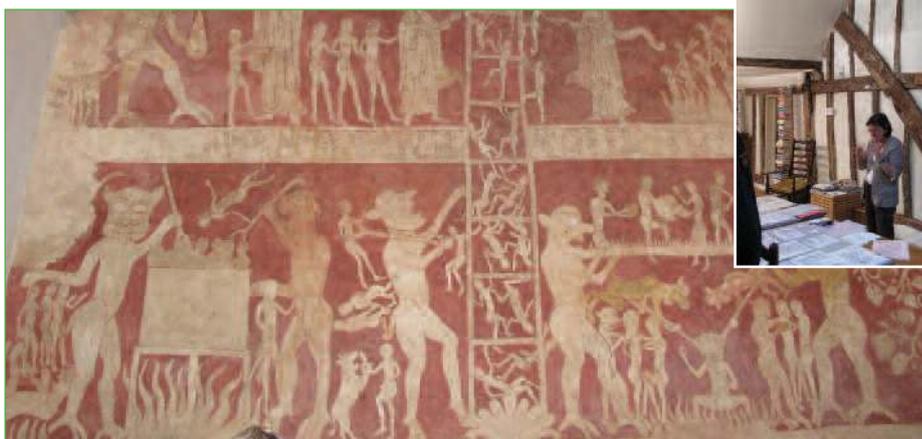
Keep warm this winter with one of our great value fleeces or polo shirts. See the 'Shop' page of our website for further details.

Visit to Chaldon

It was Friday night, the M25 was gridlocked and I was stuck in traffic and wondering what on earth I was doing flogging across Surrey to listen to a talk on some old mural. Well, how wrong could I be! I passed over the M25 turned into a small lane and disappeared into another world.

Chaldon Church is amazing. Small and intimate and oozing tranquility and ancient charm. The muted colours of the mural (right) drained my stress away and took me to a very different world with different fears and obsessions, but I learnt from the fascinating talk by Councillor Ted Howard that many of their problems and tastes were not that different to now. There was even a bottle of champagne in the picture!

The medieval mural was re-discovered in Victorian times and is thought to be one of the oldest in northern Europe.



Following on from our tour of the church, we crossed the churchyard and passed through a small gate into a gorgeous garden with a rambling old house of various ages. In fact the house dates back to the 14c and owner Madeline Hutchins kindly took us on an amazing tour and explained all the dilemmas of

living in such an ancient building - one of the oldest inhabited domestic buildings in the south of England.

We are very grateful to Madeline for her generous offer to share her beautiful home with us and support our Society.

Chris Howard



Love Local and the new Surrey Hills website

We are proud to present our new website, www.surreyhillssociety.org in which the Society features prominently.

Also featuring prominently is our new Community Interest Company, Surrey Hills Enterprises, which was formally launched during September. This part of the website hosts an inclusive directory of local organisations and businesses under the theme, Love Local. The website directory has the potential to offer information on everything from country walks to B&B accommodation and details of local food producers. The aim is to help generate funds to support the conservation and enhancement of the AONB and its rural economy, as well as provide a one-stop-shop for anyone interested in visiting the Surrey Hills.

We need your help to make this directory a success, so if you know of (or are) a local business of any kind, then explore the website and see how you can fit in and benefit from the promotion of the Surrey Hills Brand and help it become a mark of provenance, heritage and passion for the AONB countryside. There is already a core of local businesses supporting this initiative. For more information contact carrie.white@surreyhillssociety.org

Thousands watch Olympic silver



Over 15,000 spectators swarmed into the Surrey Hills Road Race Festival at Denbies Vineyard during the first weekend of the Olympics to watch the thrilling climax to the Men's and Women's Road Races on the Live Screen. Many came to join us after watching the cyclists tackle the Zig Zag circuit just up the road at Box Hill.

The Surrey Hills Festival drew both cycling enthusiasts and families for two days of sport, local food, entertainment and activities. Enthusiasts cycled in from Kent, Somerset and beyond. Union Jack outfits competed with the orange of the Dutch supporters and the atmosphere was brilliant. Television crews snapped up stories of their journeys and interviewed Rob Fairbanks, Director of the Surrey Hills AONB and Chris White from Denbies.

Rob Fairbanks said "The weekend was a once in a lifetime opportunity to showcase our outstanding Surrey countryside. The success of the festival was down to the fantastic team effort of all the organisers and volunteers. A resounding cheer echoed around the vineyard when Britain won silver".

Planning update

A Public Inquiry took place at Dorking Halls between 10 and 20 July into the County Council's refusal of planning permission for exploratory oil and gas drilling at Bury Hill Wood, off Coldharbour Lane, south of Dorking.

The proposal had resulted in much local opposition. This was mainly because of its anticipated likely harm to the sensitive Surrey Hills AONB and the disturbance to and character of Coldharbour Lane resulting from the proposed traffic management scheme to allow the many haulage vehicles to deliver and subsequently remove the rig, buildings and other necessary structures along the narrow and partly sunken lane. Local people had raised considerable funds to employ a planning barrister and various experts to present their case at the Inquiry. The County Council had employed a barrister and WS Atkins to provide consultant planning and landscape

evidence to the Inquiry. Evidence to support the County Council's decision to refuse permission and the interests of the Surrey Hills AONB was given by the Planning Adviser to the Surrey Hills Board.

In determining the appeal, much is likely to depend upon the weight the Inspector gives to any possible national economic benefits he considers would arise from the exploratory drilling for oil and gas should any be found and be viable for extraction. The applicants estimated there might be about a 30% likelihood of this happening. That would need to be balanced against his assessment of the degree of harm the development would cause to this part of the nationally important Surrey Hills AONB in the slopes leading up to Leith Hill, together with the weight he places upon that consideration. In this regard it will be interesting to see the Inspector's reasoning for his decision - in particular his application of the new Government

planning policy as contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. Running through that document is the importance the Government attaches to the planning system facilitating economic development. Yet at the same time the document emphasises that great weight needs to be attached to conserving the landscape and scenic beauty of AONBs.

If the appeal is allowed and exploratory drilling finds oil or gas that would be viable to extract, further planning permission would have to be gained for development associated with any extraction.

If you want to read more on the proposal from the Leith Hill Action Group, you can find it on our website as a pdf.

Clive Smith
Surrey Hills Planning Adviser

Double award success for members

Over the summer, two of our affiliate members have achieved award success.

Albury Organic Vineyard released their first wine at the beginning of June and were proud to have it selected as one of the three English wines to be served to the Royal party on board the Royal Barge, Spirit of Chartwell, as it sailed down the Thames with the historic flotilla to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. Shortly after this, the wine was awarded a bronze medal at the South East Vineyards Association awards ceremony. www.alburyvineyard.com



Meanwhile, at **Tillingbourne Brewery**, one of their beers - Evolution No.1 - won the Guildford Beer Festival 2012 beating some 65 other ales from 38 local breweries. For such a young brewery this is a marvellous achievement. The name of the beer was a working title given to it with the public. Due to its popularity, it has now been selected as one of their regular brews and renamed as A.O.N.B. Look out for it in selected local pubs or view their website at www.tillybeer.co.uk

Surrey Hills Society would like to congratulate both member companies on their success.

Spotlight on Holmbury Farm Bed & Breakfast



Holmbury Farm is situated in the midst of the Surrey Hills, in Holmbury St Mary. Virginia Lloyd gives us an insight into her business.....

My husband Richard and I have been lucky enough to have lived here for the last 18 years and brought up our 5 children. Nowadays, although our children have long left home, their 10 grandchildren visit as often as possible, not wholly to see us but to make dens in the woods, row in the lake and sheep watch.

10 years ago when our youngest offspring flew the nest, we wanted to share our house with others, and B&B seemed to be the answer. Since then we have been busy welcoming guests from all over the world, indeed we even welcomed a young Japanese landscape gardener who arrived in the snow with no means of transport and no hope of looking at gardens. He was good fun and after a lot of sign language he soon forgot about the gardens and enjoyed the atmosphere of the Surrey Hills. It gives us great pleasure to continually give our guests the 'wow' factor, as they look around at the amazing vista from our front door when they first arrive.

Over the years we have branched out to include clay pigeon shoots, numerous social events in our large barn and even a few weddings. We have also entertained student film shoots, charity tennis tournaments and nursery schools coming to learn about the lambs.

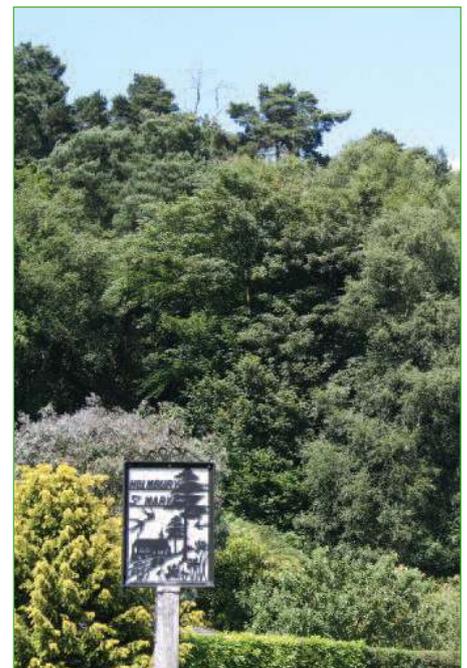


We have also built up a flock of prize winning Jacob sheep, our very first lamb is now 12 years old and

still happily grazing. We lamb every year during February/March which is a very busy time yet so rewarding. Nothing beats the magic of healthy lambs racing each other around the field, our guests are immediately out there with their cameras.

Sadly they grow up too quickly, we keep as many ewe lambs as we can manage, but the ram lambs, unless they are perfect for breeding, make tender meat. We take the skins to Devon where they are cured and turned into beautiful natural coloured rugs and fleeces, these go to Cornwall to be spun and woven into throws, scarves, blankets and knee rugs. We then sell at craft and country fairs but also have them available for our guests to purchase here - all made in England from start to finish.

Virginia & Richard Lloyd
www.holmburysheep.co.uk
T: 01306 621443.



Annual General Meeting and Harvest Supper with entertainment

Bocketts Farm, Leatherhead Saturday 20 October

The formal notice of the Society's AGM is enclosed with this newsletter; attendance at the AGM is, of course, without charge. Following the formal business, there will be a Harvest Supper, for which pre-booking is essential. Full details of the evening and a booking form are also enclosed; we regret it will not be possible to pay on the evening.

During the evening there will be a display and performance of musical instruments created from locally sourced timber harvested from woodland restoration schemes by Surrey woodworker and musician, Mervyn Mewis (below right). He will be joined by fellow musician, Kathryn Young to play traditional and ancient music on Clarsach Harp, Hammer Dulcimer and Bowed Psaltery. Commissions are welcomed.

Bocketts Farm (pictured above) is a working family farm set on the edge of the Surrey Hills in Norbury Park, Leatherhead. Jane and James opened the farm to the public in May 1992 and over the years, it has become home to many interesting farm animals as well as



providing indoor and outdoor play areas, an old barn tea-rooms and gift shop.

Major improvements in the last year have included investment in green and renewable energy sources, including PV panels installation and a biomass boiler.

The majority of the farm's visitors are families and school children but the tea-rooms and gift shop also attract a large number of walkers and cyclists from around the beautiful surrounding area.



If you like the Surrey Hills AONB...

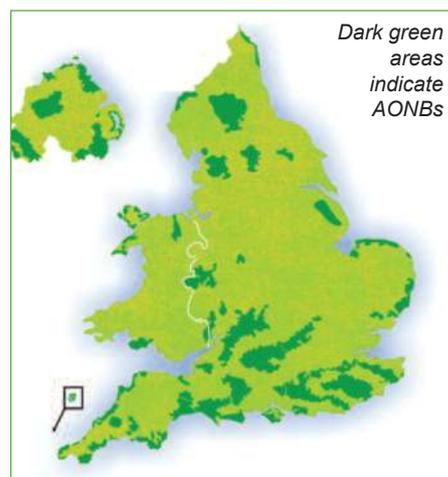
Did you know that, in addition to the Surrey Hills AONB, there are over 30 other AONBs in England plus more in Wales and Northern Ireland? Not many of them have independent charities like ours to help support and promote them but there are a number that do have "Friends of" or other supporter organisations. What they DO all have in common is special scenery and surroundings which make them worth searching out if you are considering travelling within the country.

To help you find out more about them, there is a website www.landscapesforlife.org.uk which is hosted by the National Association for AONBs. This home page includes an interactive map and list of all of the areas. Clicking on any of these will take you to a summary page about the specific AONB and a further click on their information

panel will take you to their own website.

This is a little bit of investigation which is well worth doing because many of the individual AONB websites have lots of information about their areas, including what's on, local producers, places to visit and many other useful facts. For those planning a holiday near to an AONB, the pages can give you a good understanding of the area and what makes it special. In addition, the "Events" pages of many of the sites have activities hosted either by the AONB (and open to the public) or by local partner organisations. These may include anything from guided walks to courses, talks or hands-on work.

This website is complementary to the south-east regional site www.our-land.co.uk mentioned in a previous newsletter. Currently, www.landscapesforlife.org.uk site



Dark green areas indicate AONBs

leads to a lot more content about the areas so make the most of your next leisure break by checking out some of the other AONBs and learning more about what makes our country special.

Ken Bare



Albury makes the headlines

If you were driving along the A25 around the time of the Jubilee weekend then you may have been amazed by the amount of red white and blue bunting out to celebrate the Queens 60th year on the throne. The most amazing display was to be had in Albury which made the national press with their display. Well done Albury!

Visit to Pratsham Grange



On a lovely August evening a large gathering of Society members and guests were made most welcome to Pratsham Grange, near Holmbury St.Mary by the owners, Alan & Felicity Comber. Alan gave a most informative and humorous talk about the transformation of this lovely Victorian house and 4 acre garden from its dilapidated state when purchased to the immaculate and interesting garden it has now become. It has been a labour of love for Alan, whose first job was to ring fence the site against the rabbits and deer (smart move!) and the garden is a delightful blend of both formal and informal with clipped hedges, immaculate lawns, herbaceous borders and rose beds. A winding path leads you past hydrangea hedges, a tumbling stream and tranquil pond complete with boat, all of this designed and maintained by Mr Comber himself, a remarkable achievement and a credit to him.

The evening was rounded off with many members buying plants, the donations of which will go to the most worthy Shooting Star CHASE charity, and relaxing on the terrace with drinks and snacks kindly provided by Felicity.

Angela Ohren-Bird, Society member

Chilworth has a New Look

Due to some enormous fund raising efforts over the last year, Chilworth has some new marker millstone sculptures to delineate the village boundaries and highlight the village's association with the Tillingbourne river and the variety of mills that lay along it, including the famous gunpowder mills.

Headed up by four local mums, the Chilworth Massive project as it was known, raised money through a variety of events including a large Jubilee Party at Chilworth Manor. The girls were rewarded for their efforts by a letter from the Queen thanking them for their efforts towards the Jubilee.

Guildford Borough Council and the two local Parish Councils of Shalford and St Martha have supported the project which was facilitated by the Surrey Hills Board and included new Surrey Hills entrance signs.

A bit of history about the gunpowder mills and river

The mills were established by the East India Company in 1626 and closed in 1920 after the war had ended. Much of the site is now protected as a Scheduled Monument. The mills were originally driven by waterwheels from the Tillingbourne, which also supplied power for paper mills. A millstone from the gunpowder works still remains half buried on the site.

The Tillingbourne River runs along the south side of the North Downs joining the River Wey at Guildford. Its source is near Tilling Springs to the north of Leith Hill and it runs through Friday Street, Abinger Hammer, Gomshall, Shere, Albury, Chilworth and Shalford. The river now supports a healthy fish population of both wild brown trout and coarse fish.



Surrey Highways plays vital Olympic role



Olympic cyclists and crowds on the Zig Zag, Box Hill

Surrey Highways played a vital role in preparing infrastructure across Surrey for the London 2012 Olympic Games.

A dedicated team helped prepare the Olympic route and ensured that the cycling events which took place on Surrey's roads – including Bradley Wiggins' historic quest for Gold - passed off smoothly.

Our crews were involved in preparation for the Men's and Women's Cycling Road Races, and Individual Time Trial events. Activities included temporarily widening roads, reconstructing footways, checking and repairing road surfaces and supplying 5,000 cones and 4,000 temporary road signs for the races

(supplied by our in-house specialist sign business, Nordis Signs).

We also had a dedicated team based at the Games' Transport Coordination Centre (TCC) at the Palestra building in Southwark. The team worked with the LOCOG (London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games) to help ensure safe, secure and efficient transport operations.

Tim Smith, May Gurney schemes engineer, said: "We were extremely proud to be part of such an exciting event. We delivered the programmed works on time and with minimal disruption to Surrey's residents."

Sponsor's message



We are extremely pleased to partner with the Surrey Hills Society and sponsor the member's newsletter. It is very important to May Gurney to

support your charity and help protect the unique landscape and character of the Surrey Hills.

I'm General Manager of the Surrey highways contract, under which we are responsible for Highways maintenance across Surrey. It's a six-year contract and in the first year we resurfaced almost 300 miles of road - that's the equivalent to the driving distance between London and Land's End! We repaired over 50,000 potholes and completed 611 resurfacing and repair projects and refurbished 19 traffic light junctions and 14 pedestrian crossings.

May Gurney delivers essential front-line services that make a very real difference to quality of life for the communities in which we operate. We see it as our responsibility to deliver social and environmental sustainability in everything we do, and so therefore are delighted to partner with the Surrey Hills Society and support such a worthwhile charity.

Jim Harker, General Manager
May Gurney

Working to improve the Surrey Hills

Over the past few months we've completed a series of projects to improve surfacing and safety on a series of roads across Dorking.

In June and early July we resurfaced and relined the Mickleham bypass, as well as Beaverbrook, Burford Bridge and Denbies roundabouts. Then in August we revisited all three of the roundabouts to apply anti-skid surfacing.

We worked hard to minimise disruption and thank residents for their patience while these important works were carried out.



Events programme *October to January 2013*

Surrey Hills Wood Fair 2012

Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 October
Birtley House, Bramley. Come and enjoy a variety of demonstrations, many different stalls and 'All that's Good about Wood' Entry £5 per person, Under 12s Free, Car Parking Free.

Saturday 6 October

A Day in the Country "Buckland from 1000 to 2000" a village history walk around Buckland with Duncan Ferns plus coffee, lunch and visits to the Windmill and Sandpit

Saturday 13 October

Grain and Vine Tour at Denbies Vinery
 Bacon butty on arrival then Vineyard grape picking. The 360° film experience will be followed by a buffet lunch with tutored wine tasting, brewery tour and tasting.

Saturday 20 October

Surrey Hills Society AGM and Harvest Supper with entertainment at Bocketts Farm, Leatherhead. Show your support for the Society. See details on page 5.

Visit our website for more information and booking forms.

Saturday 27 October

Headley Heath Practical Volunteering Task - Join us for a day of conservation work with National Trust ranger Will Frost. Gentle introduction to practical volunteering in the Surrey Hills. Come along and give green exercise a try. Phone Chris Howard to book on: 01483 894437.

Friday 23 November

Ancient Trees - Our Living Heritage Talk by Ted Green MBE at Leatherhead Institute.

Saturday 8 December

Guided walk around the grounds of Belmont School - take a break from the pre-Christmas build-up to join us for a walk exploring more of the lovely 65 acres of grounds of Belmont School, Holmbury St Mary followed by a warming glass of mulled wine and mince pies. A regular favourite in our winter calendar.

Saturday 12 January 2013

Winter Identification of Trees and Shrubs - A gentle 2 hour circular walk with Pamela Holt around the Sheepleas, learning how to recognise key features of trees and shrubs. Starts at the car park of the Duke of Wellington at East Horsley and returning for a bowl of their homemade soup with warm rustic bread and butter.

New idea for Christmas

Now available to buy - a beautiful gift membership pack with card set, car sticker, special offers and lavender bag. All for the price of a single membership of £15. A great gift for the friend who has everything!

To order phone Chris Howard on 01483 894437.



Surrey Hills Society

Join us

Membership Application (BLOCK CAPITALS please)

I/we wish to join The Surrey Hills Society.

Membership Fees & Donations

(please tick appropriate box)

Single annual fee £15 Family annual fee £25

£25 £50 £100 other

Total Fee & Donation

How to pay

By Standing Order (preferred option - see website for details)

By cheque, payable to The Surrey Hills Society

Membership of The Surrey Hills Society shall be deemed to constitute consent to all the Society's rules. Any information that you supply to The Surrey Hills Society will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act and not passed on to any third party without your prior permission.

Your Details

(if under 18)

Title	Full Name: (& other family members if relevant)	DOB:

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Email.....

Tel.....Mob.....

giftaid it Increase the value of your donation at no extra cost to you. I want The Surrey Hills Society to treat this payment and all donations of money I make from the date of this declaration as Gift Aid Donation.

Signature.....Date.....