

**5Bracknell Forest
Local Countryside Access Forum
27th September 2005**



Rights of Way, Access, Parks & Countryside Update

Green Flag Awards

All three sites entered for 2005 Green Flag park awards were successful this year, as follows:

- Pope's Meadow, Binfield for the fourth year running
- Westmorland Park in Warfield for the second time
- Shepherd Meadows & Sandhurst Memorial Park – the second award for this joint BFBC / Sandhurst Town Council application.

Snaprails Park, Sandhurst

Work at Snaprails park in Sandhurst, funded by a Countryside Agency Doorstep Greens grant, was completed in June. Improvements to the site included the removal of secondary woodland to increase safety and security, planting of a wildflower meadow and other new shrubs and trees, installation of a new play area and the laying of new paths. Meridian Television visited the park during June for a local news feature. The Countryside Agency are also employing a consultant who will use Snaprails as a Doorstep Green case study in a forthcoming report.

The official rededication of Snaprails Park following completion of the Doorstep Green grant works took place on 10th August.

Shepherd Meadows, Sandhurst

Funding of £15,000 has been obtained from the Environment Agency for the construction of disabled fishing platforms at Shepherd Meadows in the next financial year.

Lily Hill Park, Bracknell

The first phase of the restoration project at Lily Hill Park was officially opened on 16th June by the Earl and Countess of Wessex. The Royal couple took a tour of the restored woodland areas and wildflower meadows, were greeted by school children from Holly Spring infant and junior schools and then unveiled a plaque to mark the occasion. Numerous groups who have been involved with the project were present, including the Friends of Lily Hill Park, local conservation volunteers and the Bracknell and District Gardening Club.

On 26th June the park was home to a Victorian themed fun day, including stalls, sideshows, rides, morris dancers, a hog roast, farmer's market, birds of prey demonstrations and tours of the park. Environment and Leisure staff were on hand in Victorian dress during the day, which was attended by approximately 3000 people, exceeding all expectations.

South Hill Park, Bracknell

Following a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £42,000 in early 2005, consultants Land Management Services Ltd were appointed to prepare a restoration plan for the public park at South Hill Park.

The project has carried out a major review of the park before preparing the plan, including consultation with a wide range of interested bodies and with the public, as well as a review of the landscape and its use.

A draft management plan will be presented by LMS at the end of September.

Biodiversity/Wildlife

A team of local volunteers completed great crested newt surveys at six ponds across the borough including the Thomas Lawrence Brickworks Newt Reserve.

A barn owl survey training course was held at Westmorland Park pavilion on Sunday 19th June. The course was led by Jason Ball (Barn Owl Conservation Network) and was attended by local volunteers/council staff who ultimately will be licensed to check nesting boxes in the Borough.

As part of a programme of six biodiversity courses co-ordinated jointly by Berkshire's Local Authorities and BBOWT, a birds for beginners course was held at Sandhurst Memorial Park on April 23rd and attended by 25 people.