

Friends of the River Frome

Newsletter October 2013



[www.fromeriverfriends.org.uk](http://www.fromeriverfriends.org.uk)

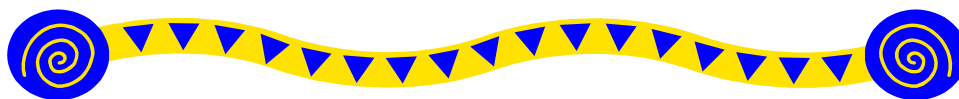


Hello, we are your guest editors for this issue. We recently joined friends of the River Frome in order to complete the voluntary section of our Duke of Edinburgh award. Our names are Megan and Aisha and we are 15 and 16 years old. We chose to help friends of the river from because we believed it to be an honourable cause. So far we have cleared a lot of Himalayan balsam along the river Frome, together with members of the River

Friends. We found it surprisingly satisfying to pull balsam from the riverbank and felt like we were really doing something good for the environment.

### ***River Friends Summer Progress***

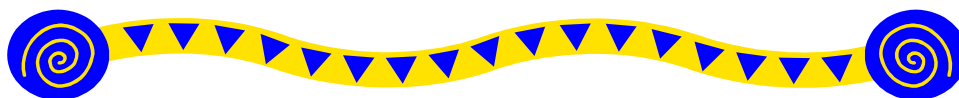
Over the past few months Friends of the River Frome have been very busy helping the community and environment by clearing Himalayan balsam from all areas areas of the river Frome and performing other activities such as litter picking, commenting of planning applications, and preparing detailed plans for the river bank. All this has been possible due to the large number of volunteers, who have worked extremely hard. Altogether, there were about forty volunteers!



### **Save the Dates**

As part of Frome Participation Week 2-9 November, River Friends are clearing the river banks of litter. We start at 10:30 am from outside the Cheese and Grain. Please wear gloves and footwear suitable for slopes.

Another date for your diary is the Sunday 11th May 2014, which will be the Mayor's garden party, in aid of River Friends, FROGS, and Open Story Tellers.



## ***Listen to Meanders on FromeFM***

Dorothy-Anne has produced a number of podcasts about her meanders around rivers, churches, and parts of Frome. This is the link to the frome.fm website, where you can view them.

[www.frome.fm/programme/talk/meandering](http://www.frome.fm/programme/talk/meandering)

## ***Balsam report from Dorothy-Anne***

### **We did the thick end of a thousand volunteer hours in 2013**

As in previous years we kept the town largely free of Balsam from Wallbridge to Welshmill. In addition we cleared at least once most stretches of the river to Blatchbridge and beyond Bullsbridge. Wessex Water cleared their bank downstream.

Among the really satisfying achievements I would list:

- The wading of the River Frome upstream from Bullsbridge led by Elaine
- The involvement of other groups such as Frome College, Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Environment Agency as volunteers.
- Making contact with landowners.
- The clearing of Himalayan Balsam from among Japanese Knotweed led by Sally.
- A useful Balsam bashing event in the Frome Festival.

It is re-assuring that most of the tributaries appear to be free of Balsam.

The following difficulties need to be addressed next year:

- Bashing early or late in the season is less effective. I suggest a greater commitment of time in late July.
- I need a lot of help with the administration.
- The owner of the land mid-way between the Retreat and Adderwell is unknown and the infestation there although tackled once at the beginning of the season eventually defeated us.

The afternoon of bashing at Iford was an enjoyable extension of our activities.