

Newsletter September/October 2017

Litterpicks

The next town centre litterpick will be on Saturday 2nd September, to get the place at its best for the Independent Market. We meet at 10am, between the entrance to the Cheese and Grain and the river (find us by our flag shown on the right). We hope to be finished by midday.

After two successive forays, the Blue House cut is much improved, and we can turn our attention to removing the tent that has appeared below the Welshmill path.

Usual dress code: boots or robust shoes, clothing that you don't mind getting muddy or snagged on brambles, and if possible some tough gloves. We provide everything else.

Children are welcome, but they must be supervised by a responsible adult.

Himalayan Balsam. Judy Hosegood writes:

Nine of us have been out in the river enjoying ourselves continuing the work of previous years to clear the river of Himalayan Balsam, the very invasive plant which crowds out our native wild flowers. The good news is that is definitely less than a few years ago, even some of the farmers have noticed that there is less than there was. We have seen magnificent trees, plenty of wildlife and noticed an increase in native species, hooray!



The not so good news is that there is still plenty to pull, so if there is anyone who hasn't been before and would like to join us, in this green and secret world, please contact me: judy.hosegood@btinternet.com

The next time we'll be going out is Thursday, August 31st in the morning.

BART (Bristol Avon Rivers Trust) is looking for volunteers.

BART is planning work in and around the Wellow Brook in Midsomer Norton and Stoney Littleton, on weekdays during September. They will be installing berms, and sawing coppiced trees. If you would like to become a human beaver, contact claire@bristolavonriverstrust.org for more information.

Pollution 1

You will no doubt be aware that in May 2016 there was a massive slurry spillage into a tributary of the river above the town. Events around this incident came to a close in June this year, when the offender was fined £3000, and charged over £19,000 costs. The Environment Agency sprayed hydrogen peroxide onto the river, to restore the dissolved oxygen level and bring it back to life, then restocked it with 5,500 fish.



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Friends of the River Somerset Frome

GO
for the
FLOW!



Pollution 2

In the May/June issue we mentioned the state of the channel in the Dippy, and the Wessex Water Stream Clean Team have taken up the case. This channel is intended to conduct surface water away from a large area of south west Frome. So far the team has found a leaking oil tank, incorrectly plumbed sinks, damaged sewers and other problems. Fixing all this should make the Dippy and the main river a healthier place. For a full report on their progress so far, have a look on their website:

<http://www.wessexwater.co.uk/About-us/News/Latest-news/Team-helps-clean-up-the-Dippy/>

Pollution 3

There has been a report of raw sewage entering the river below the road bridge in the centre of the town. This is something for the Environment Agency to deal with.

River Commentary, by Tony House

Two items from Tony this time. The first is a short piece of film (<http://www.fromeriverfriends.org.uk/HapsfordOtter.mp4>), following an otter along the river bank at Hapsford. "Where did it go?" asks Tony. The second is a photo of an enormous puffball fungus.



Illustration 1: Still from "Where did it go?"



Illustration 2: Giant puffball

Dates

Balsam Bash - 31st August. Contact judy.hosegood@btinternet.com

Litter Pick - 2nd September, 30th September. Just turn up between the Cheese & Grain & the river, at 10 am.

BART Wellow Brook works. September, Tues 5th – Fri 8th; Mon 11th – Fri 15th; Thur 21st – Fri 22nd; Tues 26th – Fri 29th; Contact claire@bristolavonrivertrust.org

Photos

Look at our gallery on www.fromeriverfriends.org.uk to see more photos taken on and around our river.