

DONINGTON & ALBRIGHTON LOCAL NATURE RESERVE

It was exactly a year ago we first started talking about erecting a bird hide in the Conservation Area and we are now delighted to say it should be completed in time for the Snowdrop Walk at the beginning of February. It has been an absolute labour of love and will become an enormous asset. Further details next month.

A meadow may be defined as a piece of grassland near a river. Calling our Meadow a meadow has been a misnomer for the latter part of last year. The exceptional rainfall rendered it almost devoid of grass in its lower lying sections as the heavy foot and pawfall churned the surface to mud. I always thought the exceptional wetness of the Meadow was just due to its shape – water collects at the bottom of things and the Meadow is v shaped. I have recently been told the water that is lying on the surface of the Meadow is coming as much from below as above. There are a series of Springs situated all along the length of the Meadow, St Cuthbert's Pool being the manifestation of one of them. Springs appear when subterranean water in permeable rock (known as an aquifer) overflows onto the land surface. As the water table rises the aquifer reaches saturation point and Springs appear. We have added yet more drainage pipes in an effort to reduce the squelch but it is what it is. At least we should never get a grass burn off during a drought.

Twenty seven of our trees now have identification labels and we've made sure one of our tree experts was on hand when we hung them. We have also had some more sapplings planted which is great. The unsightly hazard tape is a necessary precaution against over zealous strimmers

Some tree surgery will be taking place around Donington Pool this winter. This is to benefit the health of the trees but also to enable the fishermen to more easily cast their lines without getting tangled up in branches.

The Notice Board by the kissing gate on Rectory Road has been much appreciated, but more by the less vertically challenged of us. We have added another one, below the first, which will give us more room to keep you informed of what's going on, but may also be easier to see.

The first of this year's Volunteer Dates are January 9th, February 6th and March 5th. It is a great way to spend a couple of healthy hours outdoors in one of this Village's greatest assets. Paul Fallon (paulfallon6@gmail.com) will be happy to tell you more