

## PIGNEYS WOOD

### LOCAL NATURE RESERVE AND COMMUNITY WOODLAND



*'Regeneration Area'*

#### **WELCOME,**

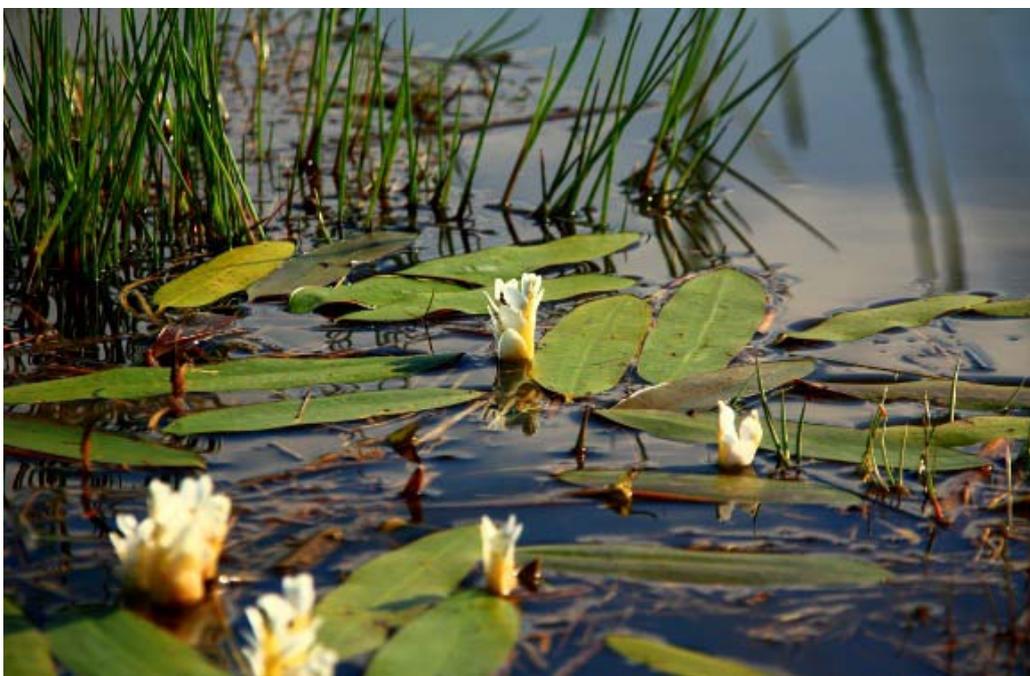
Please treat this reserve, the wildlife, trees and plants with respect. It was created for you as a quiet contemplative area for relaxation and walking with friends and family.

There is a wide range of flora and fauna here that is expanding all the time. Many people come here to photograph

and watch the wildlife. The scientific community visit in ever increasing numbers to study and collect data. Students come here from Paston College and local High Schools to complete essays and homework in peace and quiet. Families visit to picnic and get in touch with nature.

Pigneys Wood is a quiet tranquil place but is also a working woodland that is constantly changing as it evolves. Please bear with us if we have to close footpaths and other areas temporarily while work is carried out or timber is being extracted. All of this work is necessary for the future and wellbeing of the reserve, its wildlife and your safety.

Last of all we would ask all of you, especially the young interested in conservation, arboriculture and forestry and would like to develop a deeper understanding of nature, or those who just want to get out, and get fit to join us, as volunteers and help our community to maintain this exceptional place. You will find the work interesting, enjoyable and make new friends.



*'The Old Scrape'*

## PIGNEYS WOOD

### THE BLUEBELL WOOD AND OLD OAK



*'Old Oak'*

Pigneys Wood is essentially a nature reserve for the benefit of bio-diversity, which will ultimately benefit us all. It is a quiet, contemplative place and while children and dogs are very welcome, please keep both under control, especially during the wildlife breeding season.

Children can learn a great deal from nature and climbing trees and building dens does no harm at all, but we would ask you not to approach or attempt to climb the old oak in the Bluebell Wood for several reasons. There is a lot of valuable dead wood in the canopy of the old oak, which

can drop at any time and may cause injury. That is why the old footpath was diverted away from the oak. Many visiting feet walking around the base of the tree soon compact the soil, making it hard for rainwater to penetrate the roots and impossible for wild flowers to grow and lastly, to get to the tree you have to trample hundreds of bluebells (and why would you want to do that?) which are the highlight of that part of Pigneys Wood and which many people come to see.

So please keep to the footpath, respect the wild flowers and bluebells and admire the old oak from a distance, a tree we believe to be about four hundred and fifty years old and the bluebell stand is very probably even older.



*'Bluebell Wood'*

## PIGNEYS WOOD (1)

### CHANGES TO LOCAL NATURE RESERVE.



*'The New Scrape'*

There have been some changes to Pigneys Wood over the last four years to develop and enhance the infrastructure which we hope will take the reserve forward and open it up to people from all walks of life and all age groups.

Many hours have been expended on grant applications, meetings and planning by the directors on your behalf, and many hours of physical work by volunteers and contractors. Add to this the many hours of consultation and help given by other agencies and partners, Parish and Town Councils, District and County Councils, Forestry Commission, R.S.P.B., Internal Drainage Board, B.T.C.V., and many more and you will appreciate just how much effort goes into keeping a small reserve like Pigneys Wood going forward.

We only use local businesses and contractors where possible, to generate work and income for local people and keep down road miles, in fact the only money spent outside of the local area was for the supply of the dipping platform, believed to be made from recycled plastic bags.

Pigneys Wood is a real asset to the local community and to bio diversity in this area, which we are very proud of. If you are interested in becoming a trustee director and helping to make the decisions that will take Pigneys Wood forward then please contact us.

We are looking for people that have retired early but would like to remain active and to contribute something, a skill or interest such as accountancy, fundraising, organising, writing and publicity, wildlife knowledge and arboriculture skills, practical and DIY skills, or if you are just passionate about amphibians, birds, butterflies, bugs, bats, moths, mammals or wild flowers and trees, please come forward and help us to run Pigneys Wood.

If being a director sounds like too much of a commitment, why not be a 'friend' in an advisory capacity, or hands-on volunteer helping to do the work, keeping fit, making friends and having fun at the same time.

Most of the conservation work is carried out between October and February, while maintenance work, guided walks, surveys and outbreaks of fun and laughter can happen at any time.

Come and join us!

## PIGNEYS WOOD (2)

### CHANGES TO LOCAL NATURE RESERVE (WOODLANDS)

Some of you may have noticed changes to the woodland edges over the last two years. This is because the woodland edge is one of the most important parts of any woodland, in conservation and landscape terms.

You will find much more wildlife living and breeding on the woodland edge than deep in the woodland, simply because it is warmer, denser in cover and varied in height, which also helps to keep cold winds out of the woodland interior.

From a landscape point of view a carried edge provides added interest, especially in spring and autumn and breaks up otherwise bring straight edges to give a natural look to a woodland.

We will achieve our woodland edge by:

1. Scalloping it into a warm and sheltered bays for breeding birds and insects, at the same time greatly extending the length of the edge.
2. Saving existing natural regeneration from the annual moving of adjoining meadows.
3. Transplanting some natural regeneration that is in the wrong place.
4. Consolidating with new planting, some of which will be small trees and shrubs that are readily coppiced or pollarded so giving us a gradated edge up to the high forest canopy.

You will also see much more dead wood and timber on the forest floors, also felled and fallen trees left where they fall. Some people consider this looks 'scruffy' because they are conditioned by seeing tidied up woodlands devoid of much character which is the norm these days.



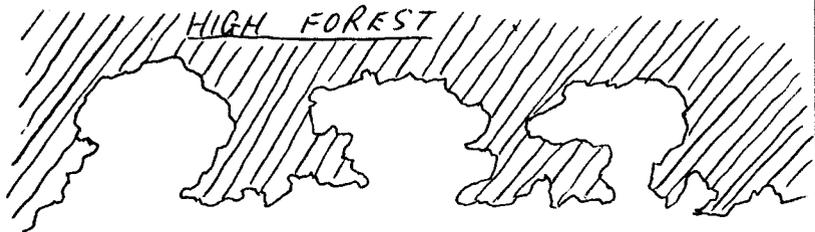
*'Dogwood'*



*'Wild Orchid'*

These 'scruffy' woodland floors provide food and many hiding and hunting opportunities for mini-beasts which birds and other animals depend on for food. This detritus is also essential for a healthy woodland floor and provides food for everything that grows in the wood. Timber scattered in this way is far more valuable and natural looking than ordered stacks of sawn logs.

PLAN VIEW OF WOODLAND EDGE.



OPEN MEADOW

Medium and tall grass and herbs with overwintering seed-heads

A location for plants like bird's-foot trefoils and vetches, food plants for the common blue and wood white butterflies respectively

Centre of ride or field edge

The ride centre needs to be open to permit access; short grass also provides a habitat for plants like wild strawberry. Let the grass seed in by itself



Cut annually at the end of the summer - not in winter when tracks could be very muddy

Cut on a roughly three-year cycle in late summer

Cut or coppiced every 5-20 years

Woodland canopy

Coppiced shrubs and bushes with brambles

Tree species like goat willow may grow here - this provides a breeding site for the purple emperor butterfly. Birds and small mammals (like dormice) live and nest here

In some kinds of woodland, brambles may grow quite densely at first. These are an excellent food source for butterflies and bees, birds and small mammals, and bramble thickets make great places for birds to nest. So while you might wish to keep brambles from pathways, don't treat them as weeds.

You will be surprised to see what natural bulbs and seeds are waiting in the ground for the opportunity to flower, and what seeds will come into the wood on the wind. Avoid planting 'improved' varieties from the garden which could easily take over and out-compete the natural plants. Garden varieties often flower and seed at different times to the native plants, which can make them much less useful as food sources for native insects and other wildlife.