

Summer at Hooks Wood has been a time to sit back, enjoy the weather and allow nature to flourish.

The trees that had such a waterlogged start to life earlier in the year have put on fantastic growth. Wildflowers, butterflies and many other creatures have come and gone.

Perhaps most satisfying of all is to see how well-trodden the paths have become, a sure sign that people have been out and about enjoying the woodland.

### Work in progress at the pond

We have started some work to encourage more wildlife to thrive in and around the pond. Over the summer, tree contractors cut back the willow trees which were growing out of the water. This has allowed light to reach the water for the first time in many years. The wonderful view over the surrounding countryside was an unexpected bonus.



*Clockwise from top left:  
meadow brown butterfly, bee feeding  
on bramble, field clover, summer picnic,  
opening day visitors*

We would like to use some of the tree trunks and brushwood to create informal seating/play features/den-building resources, as well as leaving some to decay naturally. We would love to hear from anyone with a particular interest in helping with this or any ideas or skills they can share.

For the pond, the next step will be to remove the remaining willow stumps and roots to prevent future re-growth. It will then need to be dredged, scraping out the deep layer of fallen leaves which has built up over many years, to improve both the water quality and pond safety. If we are lucky there may be dormant plant seeds in the deeper soil left behind which will be ready to spring into life once conditions are right. This interesting article describes the process of restoring neglected ponds:

[www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2019/aug/bringing-farmland-ponds-back-life-protect-britains-wildlife](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2019/aug/bringing-farmland-ponds-back-life-protect-britains-wildlife)

## National Tree Week, 27<sup>th</sup> November – 5<sup>th</sup> December



We have about 200 trees still to plant and when better than during National Tree Week? We know that many people who would have liked to join in weren't able to help with the initial planting, so we are planning a community planting day on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November, 10am to 4pm; a chance to put a spade in the ground and plant even just one young tree, especially if you missed out earlier in the year. Look out for more information soon.

We are grateful to the Tree Council for their recent grant of £1000 towards this extra planting. The trees will cost a relatively small fraction of the grant. With the larger share we will be able to afford to go plastic-free and organic; to try out new bio-degradable plastic-free tree protection tubes, and to purchase more woodchip to mulch around each newly planted tree as an alternative to repeated weed-spraying.

## Growing the Hooks Wood community

Hooks Wood is a community space, created and managed by local volunteers for everyone in the community to enjoy and be part of. If you have any suggestions, or if you can offer help of any sort, please get in touch using the details below.

If you'd like to get involved in looking after the woodland, why not come along and join us on Thursday mornings? We take on a variety of tasks to suit all fitness levels and enjoy a chat at the same time. Text 07985 455824 for more information,

or to register your interest, even if Thursdays are not possible for you at present.

We will soon be visiting Guilden Sutton Primary School to invite the children to visit the woods with their teachers. We would love to extend that invitation to other local organisations, so if you know of a local group that might like to visit, please let them know that we are up and running, and give them our details so that they can get in touch.

Website: [gsgreenspace.org.uk](http://gsgreenspace.org.uk)

Facebook: Guilden Sutton Green Space

Phone: 07985 455824